



RESILIENCE & RECOVERY NEWSLETTER

April 2020

Message from Assistant Commissioner Resilience & Recovery



Welcome to the third issue of the Resilience & Recovery (R&R) Newsletter, the first one for 2020.

The year started out well with the R&R team working hard and meeting our objectives. However the current COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way we do business and taken over many of our day to day activities. Unfortunately some of our programs, both in R&R and DFES as a whole, have been put on hold due to the restrictions that are now in place. We have not been able to engage with the community as we have before and are trialling new ways to undertake our essential work within a COVID-19 environment. We will be working with the Media and Corporate Communications Team to get the Storm Safe and Home Fire Safety campaign messages out to the community.

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Community Preparedness Welcome New Staff

The Community Preparedness Directorate (CPD) has undergone a number of staff changes recently and welcomed on board a new Director (Leah Parlour) and

a new Manager Community Preparedness (Su Ferreira).

Both Leah and Su are long term DFES employees and bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the Community Preparedness team. Leah was the former Director Health and Safety Services and has been with DFES for 16 years. Su was the former Volunteer Programs Consultant and has been with DFES for 18 years.

The CPD team are excited to work with such experienced and dedicated DFES staff members and look forward to developing a strong collaborative and effective working relationship with their new management team. I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank Linley Brown for filling in as the Director of CPD while the position was vacant.

To view the current CPD structure, please visit the Directorate page on the [DFES intranet](#).

Education and Heritage Centre

Unfortunately due to COVID-19 the Education and Heritage Centre had to close for the safety of volunteers, staff and members of the public. The centre had begun to trial weekend opening times which was a great success with over 170 visitors through the doors. A dedicated volunteer recruitment drive was undertaken which attracted 17 applicants and five volunteers went through to induction.

Thank you to the volunteers for their time so far and we hope to see you opening the centre when things return to normal!



Weekend Team L-R

Amy Waghorn, Hamed Farahpour, Thomas Martin, Saurav Randev and Chebet Sigei

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There have also been some movements within the R&R portfolio. With the retirement of Trish Wall, Manager of the Aboriginal Advancement Unit (AAU) earlier this year, the AAU have joined the Bushfire Centre of Excellence under the Rural Fire Division. I am sure the unit will continue the important work they are doing within the Aboriginal community and it was great to work with them, even for a short time.

Lastly, in these unprecedented times with social distancing and most staff working from home, I want to encourage everyone to keep safe and stay connected to each other and to remind all that the Employee Assistance Program is still available for all our volunteers and staff.

Graham Swift
Assistant Commissioner
Resilience and Recovery

State Recovery

State Recovery

Coordination Unit



There has been lots of movement in the State Recovery space since the COVID-19 pandemic. A State Recovery Coordination Unit (SRCU) for COVID-19 was established on the 27 March 2020 consisting of some Recovery and CPD staff. We were also able to access some volunteers from the State Recovery Cadre who had recently received training in the Recovery space. To allow for social distancing and for the SRCU to grow, staff have relocated to Marine House in Fremantle. A big thank you for the Department of Transport for accommodating us.

The R&R team welcomes your feedback. Please email Angela.Hennah@dfes.wa.gov.au if you have any comments or suggestions for the next issue.



Electronic Lodgement of Building Plans to Built Environment Branch

The Built Environment Branch (BEB) reviews plans and specifications of all Class 2 to 9 buildings for compliance with the FES Commissioner's operational requirements. Some single-storey Class 5, 6, 7 or 8 buildings with a floor area less than 500m² are exempt from this requirement unless a fire safety performance solution has been applied.

Until the end of March 2020, those plans were required to be delivered to the BEB offices in hardcopy. The DFES ICT infrastructure, file size limitations and concerns with digital security have previously prevented electronic lodgement of these large files. But in the last week of March, BEB worked closely with ICT to take advantage of the recently implemented GovNext digital solutions and the new Microsoft Teams technology to develop a secure solution for transferring files from building surveyors and fire engineers. The method of transferring these files was tested both within BEB and with a building surveyor firm. The trials were a success with the building surveyor remarking how easy it was. Final touches have been made on the processes within BEB to go live with electronic lodgement of building plans for the fire engineering and building surveying industry in Western Australia on Wednesday 8 April 2020.

Whilst this is a first step in modernising plan assessments within the BEB, more is yet to come. I thank all the Building Fire Safety Officers and their District Officers for their help and persistence in progressing this initiative.

Allan Riley
Superintendent Built Environment