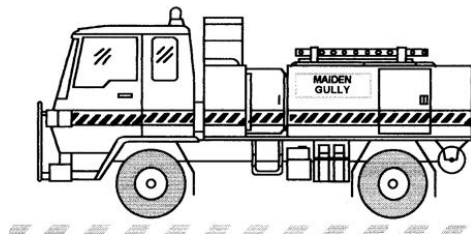


Maiden Gully Fire Brigade Summer 2018/19 Newsletter

www.maidengullycfa.org.au



Well-equipped and ready to go!

As we enter 2019, Maiden Gully Fire Brigade is in very good shape. We have four modern



fire vehicles and our operational membership is as strong as it has ever been. Over 2018, five newly recruited members have qualified as firefighters as well as bringing to the Brigade many extra skills and enthusiasm. With the continued growth in Maiden Gully and our ability to assist in other communities, the number of callouts has increased. Our recent CFA Sunday (Open Day) was a huge success with close on 350 people attending. The big Bronto ladder platform truck out of Bendigo and the much smaller "Little Red Fire Truck" were very popular. For the first time,

we welcomed our friends from Lions and Neighbourhood Watch to the day. Many sausages were eaten!

What is new this year?

The big changes are very hard to see as they all relate to digital technology. Our Incident Information System has been completed and a large IT cupboard has been installed in the Station Office for all the connections. The office looks very different to the spaghetti factory of late last year. The photo shows members with Lisa Chesters MP who assisted us obtain a Stronger Communities Grant that helped pay for much of the Incident Information System. We are also trialling a tablet that is used on the first responding truck that enables access to maps, locations of fire hydrants and important information on major premises. Our other new piece of technology is a Thermal Imaging Camera that enables us to locate fires in walls and find people in smoke filled buildings. This is a real game changer in firefighting. It was funded by the State Government through their Enhancing Volunteerism Grants Program.



How did you prepare for summer?

Major Fuel Reduction burn: We were pleased to see Forest Fire Management in conjunction with CFA complete a 117 hectare burn between Edwards Road and Rocky Rises Road prior to summer. This work makes our area a whole lot safer.

Cleaned Up around your home? Many residents have made great use of the Eaglehawk Landfill now accepting green waste free of charge all year round. This has significantly reduced the number of fire calls in the lead up to summer. It is important for you to maintain the lack of fuel around your home throughout summer especially when strong winds have brought down branches. Just be very careful when mowing dry grass that is best carried out in the cool of evening.

Always maintain situational awareness at home or on holidays by:

- Downloading the VicEmergency app to your mobile device.
- Regularly checking the Fire danger Ratings for Northern Country.
- [Check warnings](#) – make sure you understand the three different levels.
- Pack an emergency kit of essentials. This should include important documents, medications, a mobile phone, torch, battery operated radio, money and clothes so you can leave quickly before a fire starts.
- Talk to your household and neighbours about how you'll know when to leave and where to go to stay safe.

Brigade training focuses on grass and bushfires

Maiden Gully members train throughout the year, but over the summer the activities largely



relate to bushfires. Recently Brigade members visited the Fire Services Airbase at Bendigo Airport to better understand how best to work with the bombing helicopters that are based there. Helitak 335 that is shown in the photograph carries nearly 3000 litres of water. On days of with a Fire Danger of High or greater, this helicopter responds at the same time as fire tankers are despatched. It is a great system, pioneered in Bendigo, and now used across the State. Two Maiden Gully members directly assist

in fire operations. One is an Air Attack Supervisor who flies in a smaller helicopter and directs the bombers and another is an Air Observer helping to detect fires on Total Fire Ban Days.

Don't forget the VicEmergency Hotline - 1800 226 226

This free call number enables you to find out information related to fires and other emergencies. It replaces the Bushfire Information Line and can help with questions such as:

- What you can and can't do on a Total Fire Ban day or during the Fire Danger Period (fire restrictions)
- Current Fire Danger Ratings and what the ratings mean
- Current fuel reduction burns and other planned burns
- Key bushfire preparation and planning information
- Programs, publications and services available including community meetings
- Other emergency information.