



STATE FIRE COMMISSION



A N N U A L

R E P O R T

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STATEMENT OF Compliance

Honourable J Jackson

Minister for Health and Human Services

Dear Minister

In accordance with Section 107(g) of the Fire Service Act 1979, we hereby submit for your information and presentation to Parliament the report of the State Fire Commission for the year ending 30 June 2000.

The Report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the *Fire Service Act 1979*.



J. B. Gledhill BSc. FI. Fire E. AFSM

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND CHIEF OFFICER

E.A. Marchant.

E.A. Marchant BSc. BCom.

COMMISSION MEMBER

27 November 2000

CHAIRPERSON'S Report

Damage from bushfires was kept to low levels despite many areas of the State enduring the most severe drought conditions recorded. Major fires with considerable damage potential occurred around the State but due to the enormous efforts of TFS personnel, in co-operation with our partners Forestry Tasmania and Parks and Wildlife Service, damage was kept relatively low. These co-operative firefighting arrangements were well utilised, once again highlighting the benefits and efficiencies of pooling and sharing resources, infrastructures and people. Collectively these arrangements enable Tasmania's firefighting resources to be harnessed to provide the maximum operational efficiency and protection of the Tasmanian community.



Project Wake Up! was a campaign to improve fire safety in the homes of elderly and disabled members of our community

The exceptional drought conditions made fires very difficult to extinguish, causing fires to continue to burn in some areas for weeks. The consequent firefighting demands required firefighters to contribute days undertaking seemingly thankless mop up and patrol operations. I pay tribute to all involved, both career and volunteer, who once more demonstrated their commitment to community safety.

Aside from the often highly visible firefighting activities, TFS increased its commitment to its less obvious responsibilities of fire prevention and the fostering of greater fire safety in the community. A new position of Manager of Community Education was created to develop and manage fire safety programs. The primary new initiative, *Project Wake Up!*, was commenced initially through a television campaign. The project was developed to reduce the alarming increase in home fire fatalities experienced in the preceding few years. The television campaign of confronting home fire scenarios was run through the winter months. This was followed by the other part of *Project Wake Up!*. People most at risk from fires

in the home, the elderly, are identified and on their acceptance are visited by TFS firefighters who conduct a no cost fire safety check of their home and if necessary provide smoke alarms. Meals on Wheels and Red Cross are assisting TFS in identifying people to receive the fire safety checks. The initial success and acceptance of this program is seeing a steady acceptance of it across the State where in many communities it is being delivered by volunteer brigades.

Another exciting initiative involved a new partnership formed between TFS and Housing Tasmania to improve fire safety for people living in public housing. A most successful jointly organised fire safety expo held at Gagebrook in May 2000 paved the way for more around the State.

Steady progress was made over the year with the development of occupational health and safety systems. These systems will optimise safety for our employees and volunteers as well as making TFS legislatively compliant.

Training and maintenance of skills for operational career staff, and particularly

Structure

volunteers are a significant challenge for TFS. Competency based training for career firefighters has now been successfully introduced. Work is progressing to implement a competency based training system for volunteer firefighters. The number of volunteers requiring training, combined with their generally limited availability to undertake training are likely to present large challenges.

As with most organisations, Year 2000 computer readiness imposed an additional workload on TFS. Fortunately most of the potentially susceptible technology was relatively new and did not present problems. Testing and documenting systems to achieve compliance was a significant exercise. New Year's Eve for the TFS also presented itself as an operational risk because of the number of bonfires and fireworks celebrations across the State. Despite these risks the evening passed quietly both technologically and operationally.

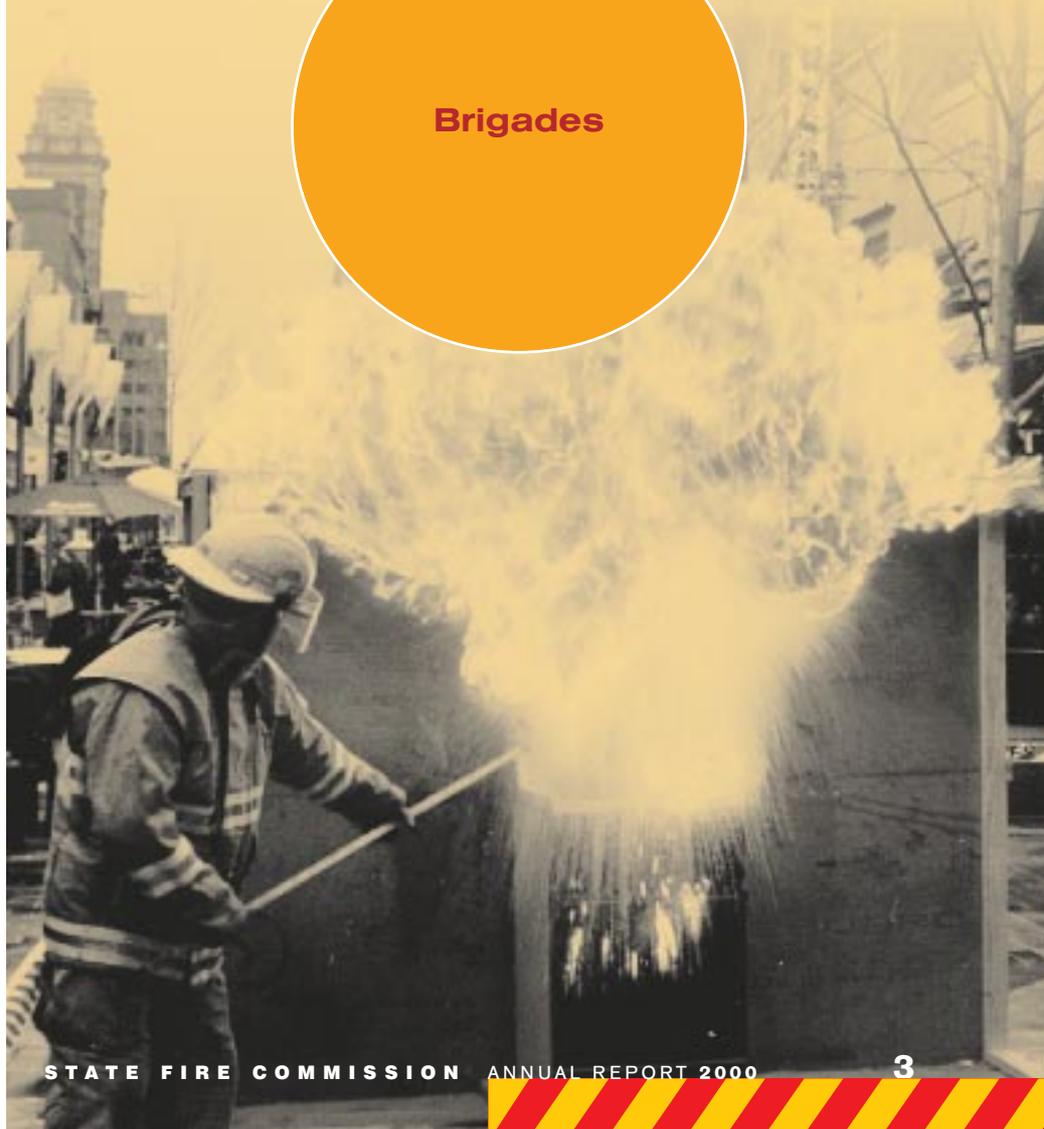
Finally I wish to express the gratitude of the State Fire Commission to the men and women of the TFS who are dedicated to serving their community. Tasmania has a world class fire service which is very much a product of their efforts.



J B Gledhill

CHIEF OFFICER

Chairperson, State Fire Commission



The State Fire Commission is established under Section 7 of the Fire Service Act 1979 to control the activities of the Tasmania Fire Service. Under the Act the functions of the Commission are:

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- to formulate the policy in respect of the administration and operation of the Fire Service;
 - to co-ordinate and direct the development of all fire services throughout the State;
 - to develop effective fire prevention and protection measures throughout the State;
 - to develop and promulgate a State fire protection plan;
 - to standardise, as far as is practicable, fire brigade equipment throughout the State;
 - to establish and maintain training facilities for brigades;
 - to conduct such investigations into fires as it considers necessary, and to prepare reports and recommendations to the Minister arising from those investigations;
 - to conduct such investigations into the use of fire as it considers necessary, to instruct the public in the wise use of fire, and to disseminate information regarding fire protection measures and other related matters;
 - to advise the Minister on such matters relating to the administration of the Act as may be referred to it by the Minister, and on matters that, in the opinion of the Commission, should be brought to the attention of the Minister; and,
 - to exercise such other functions vested in or imposed on it by the Act or such other functions relating to the preventing or extinguishing of fires as may be imposed on it by the Minister from time to time.

COMMISSION MEMBERS



John Gledhill BSc FIFireE AFSM

Chairperson of the State Fire Commission and Chief Officer of the Tasmania Fire Service. Former Deputy Chief Officer and Regional Officer of the Tasmania Fire Service with 26 years experience. A Director of the State Fire Commission Superannuation Scheme Pty. Ltd. and member of the State Fire Management Council.



Wayne Burn AFSM

Tasmanian Retained Firefighters Association (TRFA) representative on the State Fire Commission since 1990. President of the TRFA for the past 13 years. Former member of the Fire Service Advisory Council and active member of the New Norfolk Fire Brigade since 1968.



Don Mackrill AFSM OAM JP

Tasmanian Volunteer Fire Brigades Association (TVFBA) representative on the State Fire Commission since 1991. Brigade Chief of the Bell Bay Fire Brigade since 1978. Former National Secretary and Vice President of the Australian Assembly of Volunteer Fire Brigades Association. Former State President of the TVFBA.



William (Bill) Ryan AFC JP

Local Government Association of Tasmania representative on the State Fire Commission since June 1992. Served as a Councillor of the Clarence City Council for 20 years. A previous member of the State Fire Commission in the early 1980's.



Richard Bowden

Local Government Association of Tasmania representative on the State Fire Commission since June 1993. Former Warden of the Bothwell Municipality and currently Deputy Warden of the Central Highlands Council. Served as a Councillor with the Bothwell Municipal Council since 1976. Member of the Forestry Committee for the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association since its inception.



Leon Dewhurst

United Firefighters Union Tasmania Branch (UFU) representative on the State Fire Commission since June 1993. Career fire officer with 25 years experience with the Hobart Fire Brigade. Past President of the UFU.



Elizabeth Marchant BSc BCom

Department of Treasury and Finance representative of the Commission since December 1997. Business Development Manager, Services Tasmanian Project and former Senior Budget Analyst with the Department of Treasury and Finance.



OUR PAST

Since basic beginnings in the early 1800's the firefighting activities of Tasmania's residents have expanded in line with the economic growth of the State. The service was originally formalised under the Fire Brigades Act of 1883 with the current Tasmania Fire Service (TFS) established under Section 6 of the *Fire Service Act 1979*.



OUR PRESENT

The TFS is a multi-functional organisation that continues to evolve to better meet the needs and expectations of the Tasmanian community. The TFS provides services from 239 brigades throughout Tasmania. These services include property and bushfire control, road and other rescue and hazardous material combat as well as fire prevention and community education. Our services are provided by 423 employees and 4901 volunteers.



OUR FUTURE

Like similar services throughout the world we are responding to changing community expectations as well as to the requirement by government for continuous improvement, increased efficiency and cost effectiveness.

Business Definition

The State Fire Commission's primary purpose is to minimise the social, economic and environmental impacts of fire on the Tasmanian community. This is pursued through provision of a rapid and effective response to emergencies and through the delivery of a broad range of fire safety and prevention programs.

The Commission is also responsible for managing unplanned incidents involving hazardous materials.

The Commission delivers all of its services through its operational arm, the TFS.

Strategic Direction

The Commission has a number of long term goals and objectives. Currently the major emphasis is:

- Delivery of efficient and effective response to fires and hazardous materials incidents.
- Promotion, coordination and delivery of fire safety education to the community.
- Development of the TFS as a productive and safe workplace where members are able and willing to contribute towards the achievement of the strategic objectives of the organisation.

We will measure our success in terms of:

- Comparing performance with industry benchmarks
- Achieving our periodic goals and objectives
- Maintaining financial strength and viability

Our Guiding Principles

In working toward our goals and objectives we will demonstrate a commitment to the following key principles:

- Keeping in touch with stakeholder expectations
- Remaining at the forefront of international best practice
- Providing development opportunities for all members
- Displaying strength and unity in membership

Major Goals and Expected Outcomes 1999-2000 to 2001-2002

Major Goals	Expected Outcomes
Delivery of an effective and efficient fire service	A rapid response to fires and other emergencies that minimises social, economic and environmental costs to the community.
Promotion, coordination and delivery of effective fire prevention and safety education and training to the community.	Fewer unwanted fires, and a community which is willing and able to respond appropriately when threatened by fire.
Development of a safe and productive workplace where people are able and willing to contribute towards the achievement of organisational goals.	An increase in skill levels, job satisfaction, workplace safety and reduced absenteeism together with a harassment-free workplace.

Business Performance Targets

The State Fire Commission is committed to a program of continuous improvement, and has established the following targets as indicators of performance.

Performance Indicators	98-1999 Actual	99-2000 Target	99-2000 Actual	2000-01 Target	2001-02 Target	2001-03 Target
Operational						
Number of incidents	7,732	7,750	9,571	8,300	8,200	8,100
Number of fires	2,949	3,000	4,752	3,675	3,650	3,625
Number of false alarms	3,848	3,500	3,822	3,600	3,500	3,400
% of fire causes undetermined	43.0%	42.5%	33.6%	35.0%	32.5%	30.0%
% of fires in structures confined to room of origin	64.4%	60.0%	65.4%	68.0%	70.0%	72.0%
Financial						
Operating surplus after abnormal items	\$M2.0	\$M1.0	\$M1.1	\$M0.8	\$M1.4	\$M1.8
Return on assets	4.5%	2.8%	2.9%	2.3%	3.2%	3.7%
Return on equity	4.5%	2.3%	2.5%	1.8%	1.8%	3.7%
Debt to equity	12.9%	12.5%	12.6%	12.2%	12.0%	11.6%
Current ratio	55.6%	53.7%	66.9%	67.2%	66.2%	68.2%
Human Resources						
Career staff turnover	5.9%	6.6%	4.3%	6.0%	5.8%	5.5%
Average sick days per career staff member	5.8	5.7	5.1	5.0	4.9	4.8
Workers compensation claims, all employees	102	90	97	90	85	80

Other Business Issues

The Commission is a non-profit statutory authority and as such is not required to make provision for income tax, sales tax, dividends or returns to the State Government.

External market forces and the ability of users to pay for services primarily determine the pricing policies of the Commission.

The major outside sources of revenue to the Commission are contributions from land owners, insurance companies, motor vehicle owners and the State Government. In addition the Commission raises revenue through alarm monitoring fees, plan approval fees, charges for avoidable false alarms, fire reports, the sale and

maintenance of fire equipment, and the provision of training services to both the public and private sectors.

Pensioners and health card holders receive discounts on rates and motor vehicle levies from the Commission.

1999-2000

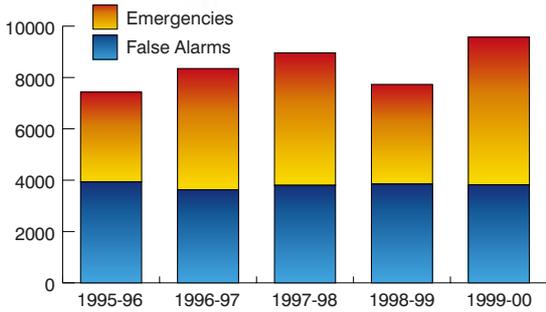
Year in Summary



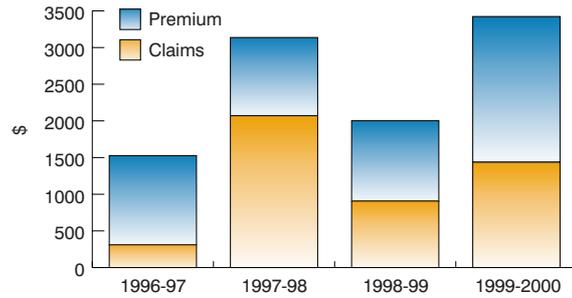
- Total incidents attended increased from 7,732 in 1998-99 to 9,571 in 1999-2000 primarily due to an increase in fire related incidents. The number of fires attended increased from 2,949 in 1998-99 to 4,752 in 1999-2000.
- A significant upgrade in protective clothing for operational personnel was undertaken. In excess of 75% of all brigades received new bush firefighting clothing and new personal protection equipment was issued to career firefighters throughout the State.
- *Project Wake Up!* was launched in the winter of 1999 to increase fire safety for elderly and disabled householders. Approximately 350 households across the State participated in the program during the financial year.
- The inaugural Fire Safety Expo was conducted in a community with high proportions of public housing tenants, a group identified as a relatively high fire risk. The expo focused on home fire safety issues and was a joint initiative of TFS and Housing Tasmania.
- The number of deaths due to fire fell by over 400% from the previous year - from 13 in 1998-99 to 3 in 1999-2000.
- A new Enterprise Bargaining Agreement covering uniformed employees was finalised in April 2000.
- Significant advances were made in improving occupational health and safety management systems throughout the diverse workplaces of the TFS.
- New fire stations were completed at Grove, Maydena, Buckland, Port Sorell, Rowella and Stowport/Natone.
- Training courses have begun at the new training facility at Youngtown in the north of the State. The complex will be extended over coming years.
- A new complex was built at the TFS Cambridge site to house the southern mechanical services and fabrication branches of the Engineering Services Division. Previously housed at separate sites a number of efficiencies are expected from the amalgamation.
- Firecomm communications centre received software and hardware upgrades utilising the latest technology and resulting in decreased call handling times for incidents.
- Significant Year 2000 planning, testing and, where necessary upgrading of systems, resulted in no performance or functionality problems being experienced either prior to, during, or after Year 2000.

FACTS at a Glance

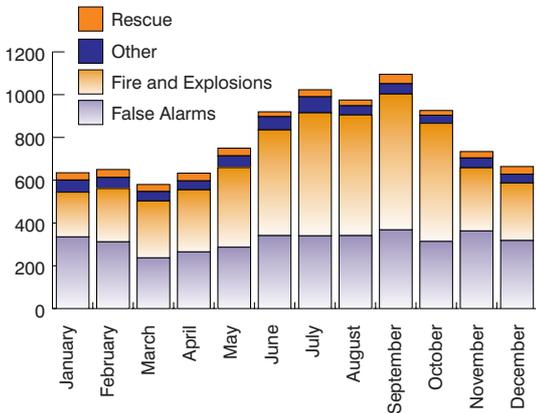
Number of Incidents 1995-96 - 1999-2000



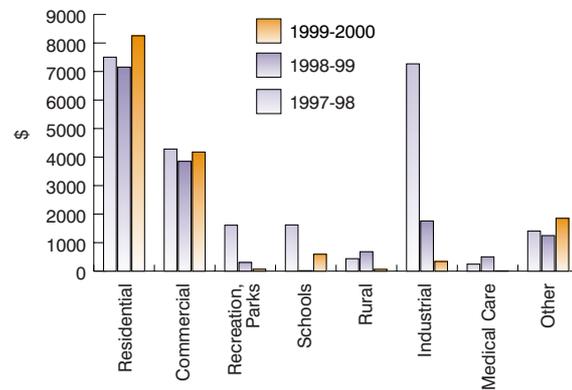
Cost of Workers Compensation Per Career Employee



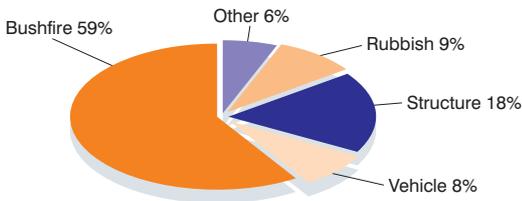
Total Incidents by month 1999-2000



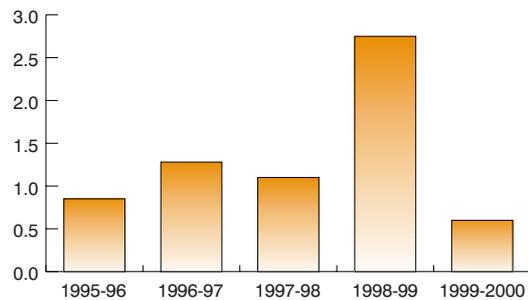
Change in Dollar loss by Property Type



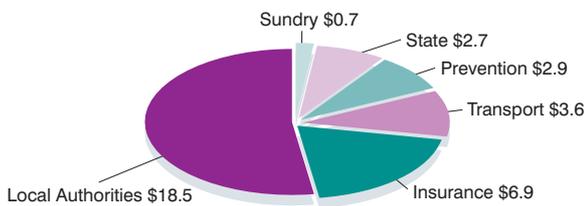
Fires Attended, by Type 1999-2000



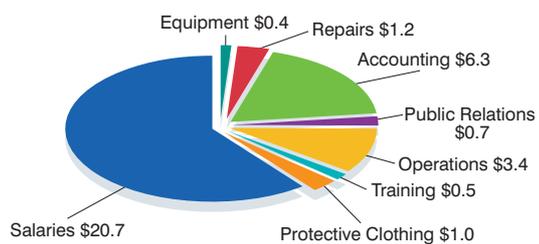
Fire Death Rate per 100,000 Persons



Revenue 1999-2000 (35.3 Million Dollars)



Expenses 1999-2000 (34.2 Million Dollars)





EMERGENCY RESPONSE

- During 1999-2000 4,752 fires were attended, an increase from 2,949 in 1998-99. This increase was primarily due to the extended, dry summer period. The number of bushfires attended more than doubled from 1,346 in 1998-99 to 2,764. There was a slight increase in the number of property fires, up from 815 to 854 in the same period.
- The first issue of new ISO standards compliant (EN469) structural firefighting personal protection equipment was issued to operational career staff throughout the State.
- In excess of 75 per cent of all brigades received new standards compliant two piece proban bush firefighting clothing.
- Firecomm staff, in collaboration with the Information Services branch and Communications Division staff, undertook a significant amount of work to test all software and hardware for Y2K compliance.
- Firecomm communications centre received software and hardware upgrades. Improvements in the operating speed as a result of new system features contributed to a reduction in overall dispatch times for incidents.
- Eight new transmitter sites for the TFS paging system were installed which enabled 300 additional pagers to be issued to volunteer firefighters across the State.
- Fire investigation procedures were amended resulting in the TFS being responsible for areas of investigation previously undertaken by Tasmania Police.



FIRE SAFETY IN THE COMMUNITY

- *Project Wake Up!* was launched in the winter of 1999 with the objective of improving the fire safety of elderly and disabled householders. The program offers free home fire safety checks and smoke alarms. Approximately 350 households across the State participated in the program during the year. The program is designed to reach many of the 20 per cent of households that do not currently have a smoke alarm fitted.
- The School Fire Education Program reached approximately 25,000 Tasmanian primary school children during the year.
- A Fire Safety Expo, a joint initiative of TFS and Housing Tasmania, was conducted in a community with high proportions of public housing tenants.
- During the year the TFS began providing evacuation planning services to the community. Demand for this service has grown steadily and approximately 50 plans have already been completed and implemented for individual workplaces.
- A Hobart youth received the Tasmania Fire Service's inaugural Community Award for Initiative in Fire Safety. The Award was established to recognise actions, of a member of the community, that results in the saving of life or property.

- Complete a comprehensive revision of the Volunteer Brigades Management Manual which is expected to be operational during 2000-01.
- Create a specialist Fire Management Unit to provide ongoing advice and support to Fire Management Area Committees, regional management and brigades throughout the State.
- Develop risk management policy and procedures.
- Continue the four year plan of issuing the latest standards compliant (EN469) personal protection equipment to all firefighting personnel with structural firefighting responsibilities throughout the State.

- To increase the penetration of fire safety programs for vulnerable people in the community by engaging the support of agencies and community groups who work with those people.
- To inform business proprietors of their obligations for fire safety in buildings they occupy.
- To improve the standard of fire protection equipment servicing.
- To inform the business community and public sector about the range of fire safety services available from TFS.
- To support the Australasian Fire Authorities Council's efforts to develop a coordinated approach to improving fire safety in the community.



OUR PEOPLE

- Significant advances were made in improving occupational health and safety management systems. New systems were developed and implemented for:
 - Hazard Reporting
 - Accident Investigation
 - Accident Reporting
 - Workplace Inspections
- A new Enterprise Bargaining Agreement covering uniformed employees was certified in April 2000. This Agreement provides staged salary increases totalling eight per cent over the life of the agreement to 30 June 2001.
- New career paths and competency standards have been established for employees in the Community Fire Safety Division and Firecomm.
- The TFS was an active participant on the Women in Uniformed Services Subcommittee established to further strategies contained in the Tasmanian State Service's *Changing Workplace Behaviour Plan*.
- Total training courses provided for volunteer firefighters for the year was 542, an increase of more than 170 from the previous year. Similarly there were 4,200 attendees at various courses during the year which represents an increase of over 1,000 places.
- The total number of career firefighter's attending Australian Fire Curriculum modules was 1,440 in 1999-2000.

- *Fireground*, the Tasmania Fire Service's quarterly magazine, will be upgraded and delivered to the homes of all TFS personnel.
- An Enterprise Bargaining Agreement for employees covered by State Awards is planned for completion during the year. The major workgroups involved in these discussions will be Engineering Services Division and Communications Division.
- Develop a framework for performance feedback, subsequent support and recognition for career members.
- Continue the OH&S project with the focus on improving and consolidating the systems developed during 1999-2000 and progressing other key areas. In addition we will re-assess our OH&S performance standards to benchmark our progress since the 1998 OH&S Review.
- Develop and implement a Statewide system of Competency Based Training for volunteer operational personnel.



RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

- The Operating Surplus for the State Fire Commission for 1999-2000, after Abnormal Items, was \$1.1 million and on budget.
- Work is nearing completion on the new training building in Youngtown and the Engineering Services complex at Cambridge.
- New fire stations were completed at Grove, Maydena, Buckland, Port Sorell, Rowella and Stowport/Natone.
- In 1999-2000 Engineering Services completed its biggest ever fire appliance fabrication commitment since its establishment in the late 1980's. A total of 20 units were completed during the year.
- Communications Division installed eight new paging transmitters with the extra coverage gained allowing 300 additional pagers to be issued to volunteer firefighters across the State.
- Firecomm communications center received software and hardware upgrades utilising the latest technology.
- Significant Year 2000 planning, testing, and where necessary upgrading of systems resulted in no performance or functionality problems either prior to, during, or after Year 2000.
- The TFS Web site was launched in July 1999 providing information on fire permits, warnings, current fire situations, media releases and mapping of fire locations in Tasmania as well as recruitment and general information.

- Facilities at Cambridge are expected to be completed and fully operational. Training facilities at Youngtown will also be completed with further developments planned for the site over the next few years.
- Major building projects for 2000-01 include construction of the combined Fire and Ambulance Stations at Strahan and Dunalley plus new stations at Mole Creek, Bagdad and Hadspen.
- The paging system will be further extended on the west and north west coasts as well as King and Flinders Islands resulting in paging services being available to nearly all brigades personnel throughout the State.

Outcomes/Achievements 1999-2000

Planned Outcomes/
Achievements 2000-2001

EMERGENCY Response

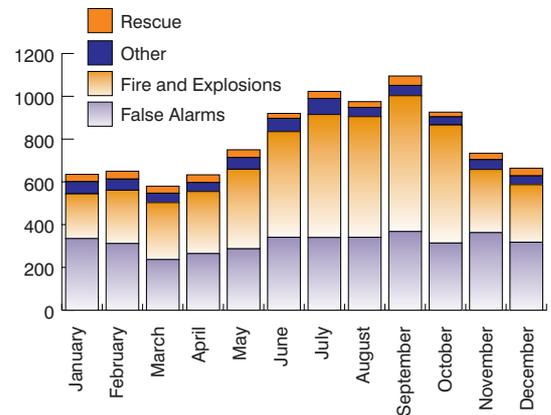


To respond to fire and other emergency needs of the Tasmanian community with the appropriate resources in a timely and efficient manner.

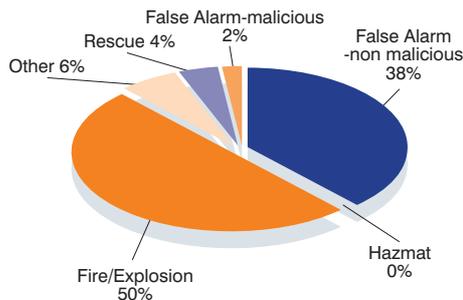
Brigade Activity

There was a significant increase in the number of incidents attended by brigades during the 1999-2000 financial year. A total of 9,571 reported incidents were attended which is significantly higher than the 7,732 incidents attended in 1998-99. The majority of this increase in total incidents was due to the number of bush and scrub fires attended, more than double the figure of the previous year. This increase reflects the prolonged dry summer period experienced throughout the State as indicated by the graph of incidents attended by month. A positive result achieved was a net decrease in the number of malicious and non-malicious false alarms reported.

Total Incidents by month 1999-2000



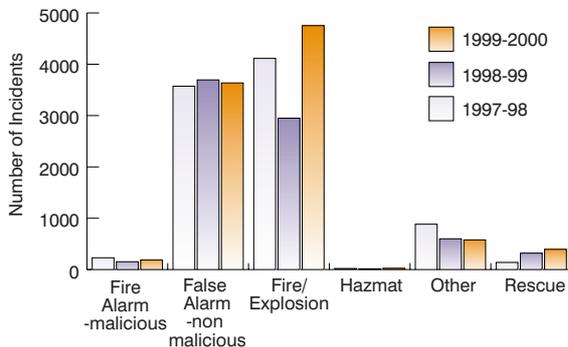
Incidents Attended, by Type 1999-2000



Bushfire Season

The 1999-2000 fire season began early and continued through to late autumn 2000. Near record low rainfall across Tasmania during autumn and winter 1999 resulted in high levels of combustible fuels present throughout the State. A Fire Permit Period was declared statewide on 1 December 1999 and finally revoked in the Southern Region on 19 May 2000.

Change in Incidents Attended, by Type



The large number of bonfire and fireworks displays intended for New Years Eve and the so called Y2K event had the potential to require a very high level of firefighting resources. Over 450 fire permits were issued for New Years Eve with approximately 260 of those being "bonfire" permits. Fortunately, brigade inspections of bonfires and public cooperation as well as some rains, resulted in a reasonably quiet time for brigades with only 53 incidents being attended, 37 of those being vegetation fires.

Significant rains around the New Year occurred in the north east and east which effectively ended the fire season for much of those areas. Across the rest of the State, substantial rains eventually arrived in late autumn and early winter 2000.

In January major fires occurred on the west coast (Gormanston / Linda, 5 houses lost), north west coast (Camdale), north coast (Pipers River) and Eastern Tiers (Lake Leake).

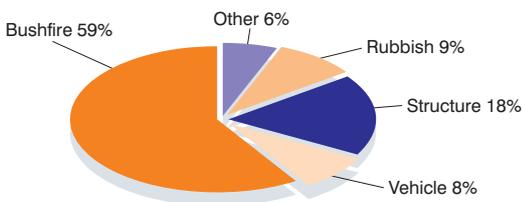
In February a large scrub and grass fire in Launceston (Ravenswood) threatened many houses. In the south west major fires occurred at Glen Huon and South Bruny Island which required extensive resources. In the north west large fires occurred at Round Hill and Lorinna. A Total Fire Ban was declared for the entire State on 19 February and for the Southern and Northern Regions on 2 March 2000.

The Fire Permit Period was revoked on 31 March for the Northwest Region (excluding King Island) and for the Northern Region and King Island on 26 April. On 28 April a large fire occurred at Neika on Hobart's southern outskirts. The Fire Permit Period for the Southern Region was revoked on 19 May 2000, the latest ever as a consequence of the prolonged dry conditions.

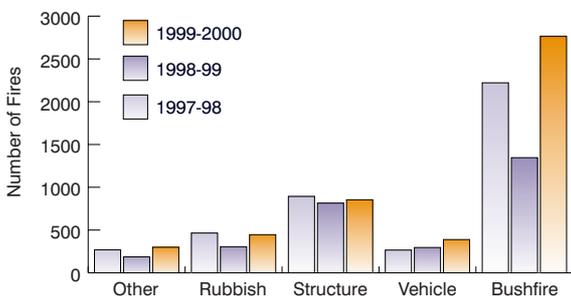
Overall, the weather was significantly warmer, dryer and more unstable than average although the number of extreme fire danger days was not significantly higher than average. The number of bushfire incidents was double that of the previous season and the highest of the preceding decade which includes the drought years of 1994-95 and 1997-98. The relatively low levels of damage and loss reported is a credit to the brigades who attended the fires and to the community which cooperated by reducing bushfire hazards.

The number of fires attended by brigades during 1999-2000 significantly increased to 4,752 incidents in comparison to 2,949 for 1998-99.

Fires Attended, by Type 1999-2000



Changes in Fires Attended, by Type



Fire Permits Issued 1999-2000

Region	Number
North West	1,237
Northern	1,374
Southern	2,863
Total for State	5,474

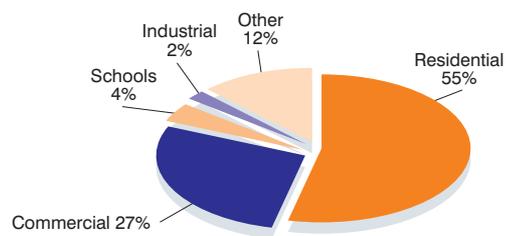
A total of 5,474 permits were issued during the year which is further evidence of the severe and prolonged fire season. In comparison the total number of permits issued in 1997-98 was 2,809 with 1,802 issued during the 1998-99 period.

Property Fires

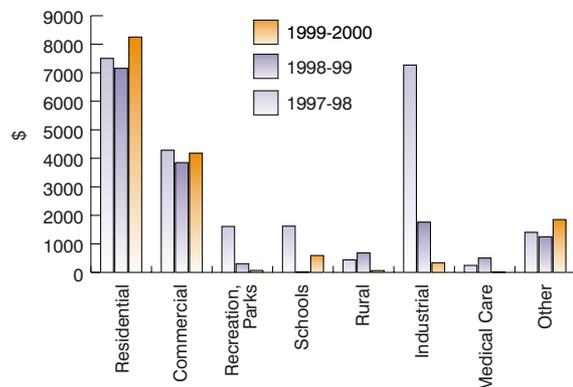
The State experienced a decrease in the total value of property losses due to fire down from \$15.5 million in 1998-99 to \$15.3 million in 1999-2000. The reduced value represents a significant outcome for the TFS because the total number of fire incidents was significantly higher during the current year. This is the second successive year the State has experienced a decrease in the total value of property losses due to fire.

Residential property losses continue to represent the bulk of all losses and remains one of the key areas targeted by the TFS for fire prevention and safety programs.

Dollar loss by Property Type 1999-2000



Change in Dollar loss by Property Type



Extent of damage

A key performance indicator when measuring the effectiveness of the TFS in mitigating property damage as the result of fire is the number of fires that spread beyond the room of origin of the initial fire. The current year showed a slight improvement in this indicator. In 1999-2000 65.4 per cent of all structure fires were confined to the room of origin compared to 64.4 per cent in 1998-99. This success combined with the reduction in response times to incidents, suggests we are continuing to improve our efficiency and effectiveness in emergency response, public education campaigns and fire safety and mitigation activities.

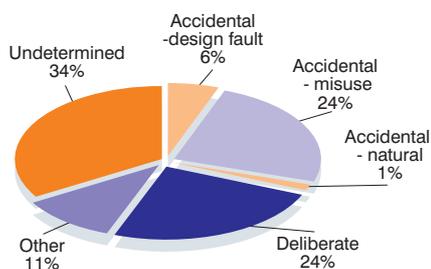
Due to a change in the reporting system definition of this indicator statistics for years prior to 1998-99 are not comparable with the last two years.

Cause of Fires Attended

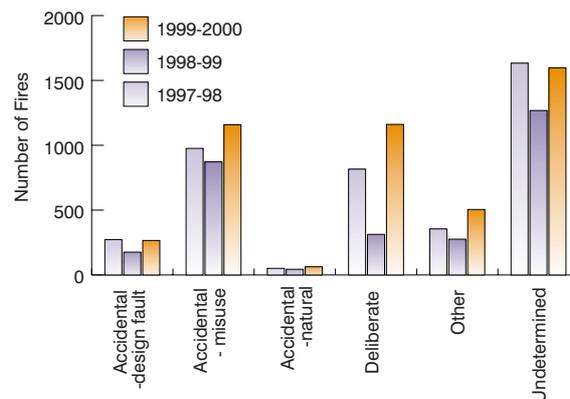
There was a significant increase in the number of deliberately lit fires reported, up from 313 in 1998-99 to 1,161 in 1999-2000. The current figure closely corresponds to that of the 1997-98 period reflecting, among other things, an increase in the number of escaped burnoffs due to the severe fire season in both years.

A positive outcome was the significant reduction in the percentage of fires with an undetermined cause, down from 43 per cent to 34 per cent of total fire incidents. This reduction reflects an increased commitment to training and reporting in fire investigation.

Fires Attended, by Cause 1999-2000



Change in Fires Attended, by Cause

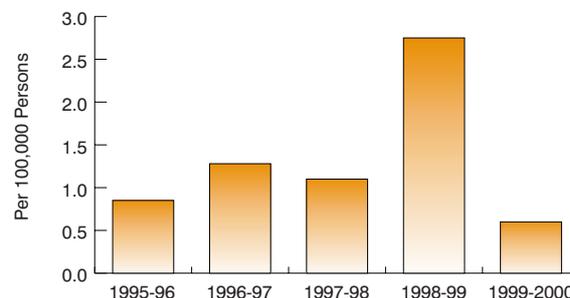


Deaths/Injuries as a Result of Fire

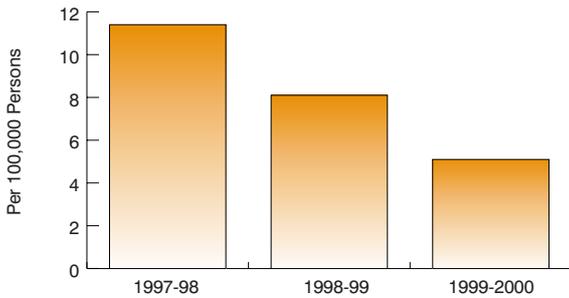
The year showed a marked improvement in the number of deaths and injuries as a result of fire. Both factors were considerably less than the Australian average per 100,000 people for the same period. The number of deaths in Tasmania due to fire fell by over 400 per cent in comparison to the 1998-99 period, down to 0.6 deaths per 100,000 people in 1999-2000. The Australian average for 1998-99 was 0.8 deaths per 100,000 people.

Considering the significantly greater number of incidents attended in 1999-2000 in comparison to the previous year the reduction in both deaths and injuries as a result of fire is an extremely positive outcome for the TFS. The figures reflect achievements in all facets of emergency response, for example improved response times to incidents. The figures also highlight the success of TFS in educating the community with regard to the dangers of fire and how to react when confronted by a fire situation.

Fire Death Rate



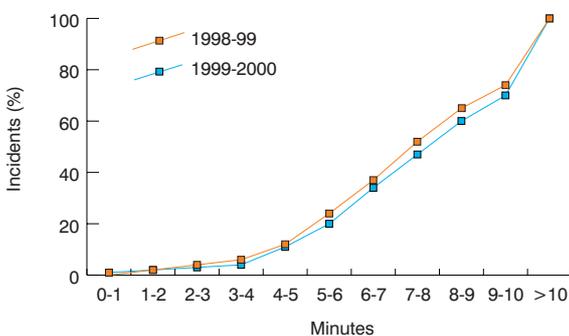
Fire Injury Rate



Response Times

Minimising response times is a crucial factor in dealing with any emergency incident. Fire services have little control over the time elapsed between the start of a fire and when a fire call is received. In addition, there are many factors outside the control of the fire service that impact on response times. These factors include weather conditions, topography, road networks and traffic situations. The graph indicates the response times for all incidents, defined as the time from when Firecomm answers a call reporting an incident until the first TFS unit arrives at the scene of the incident. Response times have uniformly improved in 1999-2000 in comparison to 1998-99 which represents a positive outcome in working toward the area's corporate goal of responding to emergencies in a timely and efficient manner.

Response Times (structural fires)



Statistical Information

The data used for the reporting of operational activities was derived from the Service's incident reporting system which conforms to Australian Standard 2577 - Australian Incident Reporting System.

All TFS fire brigades contribute data to the reporting system. Incident reports are compiled from observations made at the scene by responding officers and fire investigators.

Official incident reports from brigades were received for 97.7 per cent of the 9,797 incidents responded to by the TFS. All graphs and tables are based on incidents with completed reports.

Firecomm Activities

Fire Season and Resourcing

The severe fire season and resulting high number of incidents in 1999-2000 resulted in an extremely busy year for Firecomm personnel. A number of support staff (8) were drawn from TFS administrative staff to supplement Firecomm staffing during times of high activity and at weekends. The support staff contributed 254.5 hours in the operation of Firecomm between December 1999 and May 2000.

Y2K Preparations

A significant amount of work was undertaken by Firecomm staff, in collaboration with the Information Management unit and Communications Division staff, to test all software and hardware for Y2K compliance. Contingency plans and procedures were produced, tested and documented. Systems were rolled forward to all "critical" dates and completely tested using several different scenarios. All critical dates passed without any Y2K related incidents.

Occupational Health & Safety

A Working Party was established involving management, Firecomm staff, rehabilitation providers, consultant physiotherapists and an office furniture manufacturer to review Firecomm's ergonomic workstations following a number of strain injuries. The design refurbishment will be fully complete and operational by September 2000.

EMERGENCY Response

Fire Investigation

Fire Investigation Officers investigated 202, or 4.2 per cent of all fires, during 1999-2000. The section investigates any fire where any of the following circumstances exist:

- A major fire*.
- Where a fatality or serious injury** has occurred.
- Where a coroner requests that it be investigated.
- Where the fire is apparently deliberate, suspected to be deliberate and the fire causes or has the potential to cause major damage.
- Where the cause is not known and the fire causes or has the potential to cause major damage.
- Where a person(s) is or is likely to be charged with a crime*** in relation to the fire.
- Where required by a senior officer.

*Includes fire(s) of significant financial or historic loss and/or of political or public.

**Where the injury may result in the eventual death of a person.

***A decision which will normally be made by Tasmania Police.

By mutual agreement with Tasmania Police, TFS was made solely responsible for investigating all fires with the Police only involved in fire investigation when the fire has been deemed deliberately lit. The decision as to whether the fire is deemed to be the result of a criminal act or not rests solely with the TFS Fire Investigation Officer. TFS is now also responsible for sample taking, interviewing and site security, previously the responsibility of Police.

There has been a significant increase in the sales of reports, primarily due to increased sales to the insurance industry. Many insurance claims are now determined solely on the opinion of the Fire Investigation Officer.



EMERGENCY RESPONSE

Planned Outcomes/Achievements 2000-01

- Complete a comprehensive revision of the Volunteer Brigades Management Manual which is expected to be operational during 2000-01.
- Create a specialist Fire Management Unit to provide ongoing advice and support to Fire Management Area Committees, regional management and brigades throughout the State.
- Develop risk management policy and procedures.
- Continue the four year plan of issuing Standards compliant (EN469) personal protection equipment to all firefighting personnel with structural firefighting responsibilities throughout the State.

COMMUNITY Fire Safety



To have a Tasmanian community which is able to manage and respond to fire appropriately

Community Education and Publicity

A full-time Community Education Manager was appointed in December 1999 to lead the five-strong Community Education Unit and to manage education programs which target those in the community most at risk from fire.

During the year New Norfolk Fire Brigade won the Emergency Management Australia inaugural national Safer Communities Award in the volunteers pre-incident category. Presented in Canberra by the Minister for Defence the Award recognises efforts by brigade members to improve safety in the homes of elderly residents in their town. The Brigade's innovative 'home fire safety audit' was the forerunner to *Project Wake Up!*, which is now being extended to elderly and disabled householders across the State.

Project Wake Up! was launched by the Minister in the winter of 1999 to improve the safety of elderly and disabled householders. The program offers free home fire safety checks and free smoke alarms where necessary. Approximately 350 households across the State participated during the financial year. The objective of the scheme is to reach many of the 20 per cent of Tasmanian households that do not currently have a smoke alarm installed.

TFS and Housing Tasmania are working together to implement measures to improve fire safety in public housing. The distribution of home fire safety literature, the maintenance of smoke alarms, a review of building design, the selection of safer stoves and heaters, and strategies to address deliberately lit fires in vacant homes are all contributing to better fire safety in public housing.

The inaugural Fire Safety Expo, a joint initiative of TFS and Housing Tasmania, was conducted in a community with a high proportion of public housing tenants. Such areas have been identified as a higher risk category for fire incidents. The expo focused on common home fire safety issues including stove-top fires, heater safety, and the use of smoke alarms. The first expo, at Gagebrook, attracted approximately 2000 participants.

More expos are planned for all regional centres.

The Community Education unit covers a variety of TFS programs including:

Fire Awareness for Children

The School Fire Education Program reached approximately 25,000 Tasmanian primary school children during the year. The program teaches children about fire safety in the home, and what to do if fire breaks out.

The positive outcomes of the School Fire Education Program were recognised when a Hobart youth received the Tasmania Fire Service's inaugural Community Award for Initiative in Fire Safety. The Award was established to recognise actions, of a member of the community, that results in the saving of life or property. During a house fire the recipient successfully practiced the lessons he had learned from the Program which resulted in him saving the lives of his family.

The Juvenile Fire Lighter Intervention Program provides counselling for young children engaged in unsafe fire lighting behaviour. During the year 45 cases were referred to the TFS. The Program continued to deliver outstanding results with over 90 per cent of children who completed the program not involved in any further lighting of fires.

Bushfire Awareness

The Community Fireguard program promotes the establishment of groups of residents in areas susceptible to bushfires. These groups are given information on how to identify and manage local bushfire hazards, how to establish and maintain a communications system to support collaboration when fire threatens, and how to identify safe havens and escape routes. This initiative supports the agreement between TFS and Tasmania Police regarding evacuations in the event of bushfires. During 1999-2000 23 groups comprising 319 residents were established.

Fire Awareness Week commenced on Sunday 24 October 1999 and signalled the start of the TFS's campaign to raise

awareness of bushfire hazards in the approach to the summer bushfire season. Press, radio and TV were each used to warn those living in areas at risk from bushfires to clean up hazards and make other preparations to protect themselves and their properties during the fire season.

Smoke Alarms

Surveys completed by the TFS as well as independent surveys by the Australian Bureau of Statistics indicate approximately 80 per cent of Tasmanian households have smoke alarms installed in their homes. However, of 591 structural fires reported during the year approximately only 20 per cent of the homes involved had a smoke alarm installed. That is 80 per cent of structural fires attended by TFS take place in homes without a smoke alarm fitted. Of the 20 per cent of structural fires where a smoke alarm was installed over 65 per cent of those alarms were deemed to have potentially saved the lives of the residents involved.

National Smoke Alarm Day was held on 3 June 2000 and was designed to promote the installation and maintenance of smoke alarms. Press, radio and TV were each used to promote the need for working smoke alarms in residential property.

Industrial Fire Training

TFS's TasFire Training reached over 8,000 industry employees around the State in 1999-2000. The section provided a range of programs from basic fire safety in the workplace to industrial emergency response team training and safe entry into confined spaces. The majority of those receiving training work in the high fire risk areas of health care, and to a lesser degree heavy industry. The strong demand from the business sector for training and evacuation planning exceeded expectations.

TasFire Equipment

TFS, through its commercial arm TasFire Equipment, is a leading supplier of portable fire protection equipment sales and service for the business and domestic sector. The unit is actively involved in the promotion of this equipment, which has contributed to increased community awareness of fire and use of all types of fire protection equipment.

Fire Safety in Buildings

In late 1999 the TFS began providing evacuation planning services to the community. Demand for this service has grown steadily and already some 50 plans have been completed and implemented for individual workplaces. The majority of plans have been developed for the health care industry and include significant projects such as the Royal Hobart, Calvary and Hobart Private Hospitals. During the year 91 evacuation plans received formal approval.

Inspections of new and renovated buildings to ensure compliance with the fire safety requirements of the *Building Code of Australia* remains an important objective of the TFS. The intent of this process is to ensure that building occupants, firefighters and adjacent buildings are safe from fire. Approximately 240 inspections of licenced premises were conducted throughout the State along with inspections of many healthcare facilities, schools and other businesses.

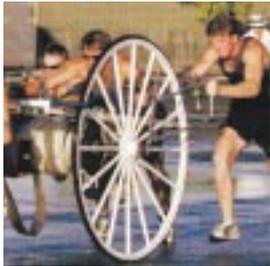


COMMUNITY FIRE SAFETY

Planned Outcomes/Achievements 2000-01

- To increase the penetration of fire safety programs for vulnerable people in the community by engaging the support of agencies and community groups who work with those people.
- To inform business proprietors of their obligations for fire safety in buildings they occupy.
- To improve the standard of fire protection equipment servicing.
- To inform the business community and public sector about the range of fire safety services available from Tasmania Fire Service.
- To support the Australasian Fire Authorities Council's efforts to develop a coordinated approach to improving fire safety in the community.

OUR People

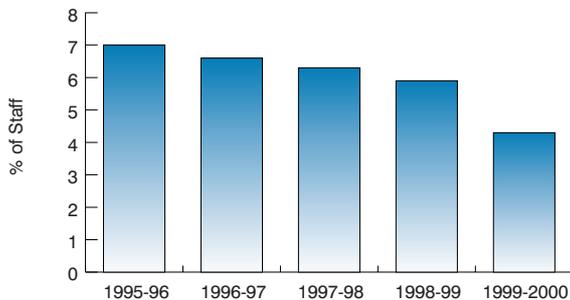


To position the State Fire Commission as a productive and safe workplace, where members are able and willing to contribute towards the achievement of the strategic objectives of the organisation.

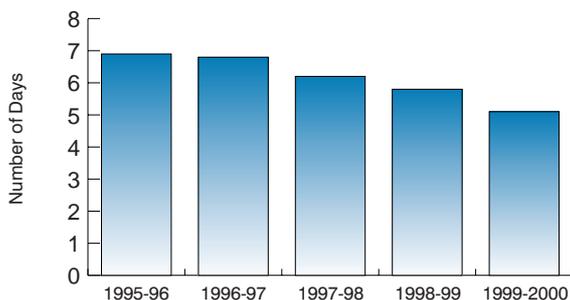
TFS Personnel

As at 30 June 2000 the TFS had 383 permanent employees, 40 temporary and casual staff and 4,901 volunteer personnel. Of the 383 permanent employees 240 were operational firefighters of the rank of Brigade Chief and below. Career staff turnover was 4.3 per cent for the year, a significant reduction from the 1998-99 figure of 5.9 per cent and reflects a decreasing trend in this indicator over the past five years. Similarly the average sick days per career staff continues to decrease, down from 5.8 days in 1998-99 to 5.1 for 1999-2000.

Career Staff Turnover



Average Sick Days per Career Staff per Annum



Occupational Health and Safety

Workplace safety was the major human resources focus during 1999-2000. Significant advances were made in improving our occupational health and safety management systems. New systems have been developed and implemented for hazard reporting, accident reporting, accident investigation and workplace inspections. In addition, procedures are almost finalised for contractor safety, plant isolation and out of service.

Training and various communication tools were used to ensure that our people understand the new occupational health and safety initiatives. Both career and volunteer supervisory members received training on their responsibilities regarding occupational health and safety and the use of the new systems.

Managing Diversity

During the financial year the TFS continued to work at raising the levels of awareness of our people regarding harassment, discrimination and equal employment opportunity. Training sessions were regularly delivered as part of the Recruit Course for new career firefighters. The issues were also a major segment within the Brigade Management Course for prospective volunteer officers.

The TFS was also an active participant on the Women in Uniformed Services Subcommittee which is focussing on implementing strategies contained in the Tasmanian State Service's *Changing Workplace Behaviour Plan*. The Subcommittee has almost completed its deliberations and will be seeking approval for its report and implementation plan in the near future.

Training and Career Development

During the year a new training facility was established at Youngtown in northern Tasmania. The new facility will assist in furthering our strategy of increasing access to training throughout the State. An urban search and rescue (USAR) training prop has been developed at this site. The training facility at Cambridge is also developing mobile training props utilising shipping containers for distribution throughout the State.

Career Training

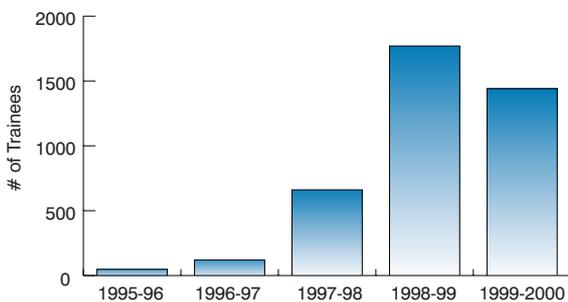
TFS career firefighter training is based on the Australian Fire Curriculum (AFC). Practical training is generally provided by the TFS while the majority of theoretical modules are provided by TAFE Tasmania. The successful completion of certain core and elective competencies result in the award of nationally recognised qualifications.

During the year career firefighters were introduced to skills maintenance which was designed to ensure the skills base of operational personnel is continually maintained. Training Services conducted two twelve week recruit courses this year, introducing 23 new firefighters to the TFS. Leading Firefighter and Senior Station Officer assessment blocks and District Officer development workshops were also conducted.

During 1997-98 and 1998-99 Recognition of Current Competence Interviews were conducted with operational career personnel which resulted in 295 qualifications being awarded. The number of qualifications awarded decreased to 54 in 1999-2000 reflecting the award of qualifications for ongoing training and assessment only. Similarly the total number of attendees at AFC module training has decreased from 1,770 in 1998-99 to 1,440 in 1999-2000. The following graph reflects the increase in competency based training and assessment since the systems inception in 1995-96.

During the year Launceston Brigade Chief Mike Brown was selected by the Australasian Fire Authorities Council to attend the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, U.S.A. As one of only two Australian fire officers to be awarded the scholarship he undertook the Executive Fire Officer Program.

AFC module trainees



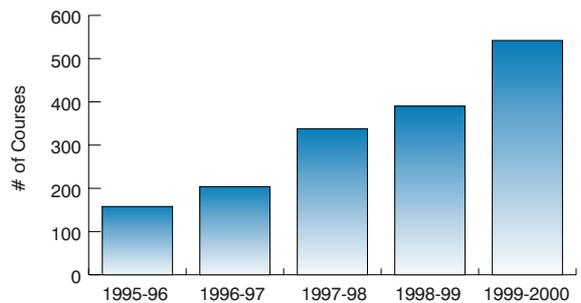
Volunteer Training

A number of volunteer courses were amended in preparation for a move to a nationally accredited training system. Training Services identified the competencies that volunteer firefighters need to effectively fulfil their operational role as the TFS progresses toward the adoption of the Public Safety Training Package. This Package incorporates national firefighter training standards and will replace the modular training framework currently used in Australia.

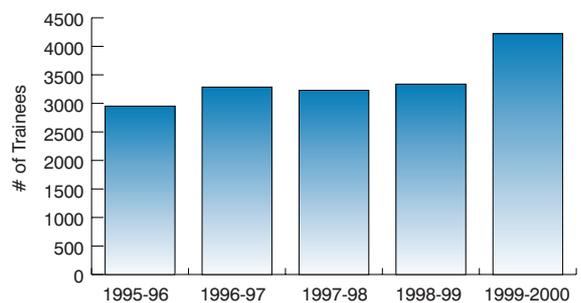
During the year there was a significant increase in the number of volunteer officers and firefighters trained. Total courses provided for the year was 542, an increase of more than 170 from the previous year. Similarly there were 4,200 attendees at various courses during the year which represents an increase of over 1,000 places.

Of the total courses provided approximately 52 per cent were trained by Career Instructors with the remaining 48 per cent under the direction of Volunteer Training Instructors.

Volunteer Training Courses



Volunteer Trainees



Career Paths

New career paths and competency standards have been established for employees in the Community Fire Safety Division and Firecomm. The career paths are designed to create greater opportunity for employees to gain nationally accredited qualifications. The same principles will be used to develop career paths and competency standards in training and field areas for our operational firefighting personnel as well as in non-uniformed areas such as Communications and Engineering Services Divisions.

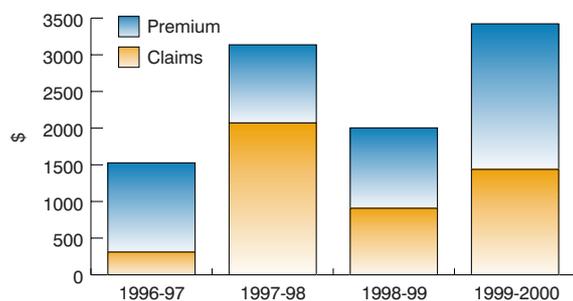
Employee Relations

The employee relations environment within the TFS has been positive during the past financial year. The major focus of activities has again been enterprise bargaining with a new Certified Agreement covering uniformed employees being finalised in April 2000. The Agreement provides staged salary increases totalling eight per cent over the life of the agreement finishing 30 June 2001. The costs of the increases will be offset by improvements in productivity and reduced employment costs. The negotiations for this agreement were conducted in a constructive manner which enabled sound outcomes to be achieved. Enterprise bargaining discussions are currently underway with employees covered by state awards. The major workgroups involved in these discussions are Engineering Services and Communications Divisions.

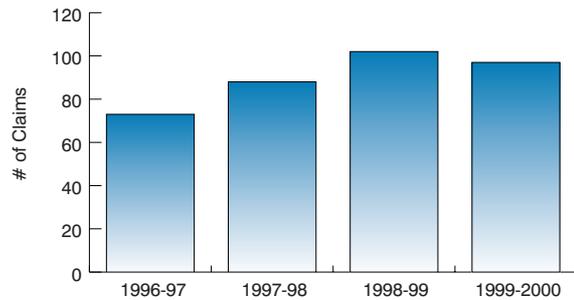
Workers Compensation

The number of workers compensation claims was slightly reduced from the previous year however the number continued to be higher than the target figure. The number of claims during the 2000-01 year and following years is expected to decrease with the implementation of the new occupational health and safety systems.

Cost of Workers Compensation Per Career Employee



Workers Compensation Claims Career Staff



Awards and Medals

Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM)

The 1999-2000 AFSM recipients were invested with their awards by the Governor of Tasmania. Recipients were:

David Bryan – former Brigade Chief of Sandfly Brigade

Cedric Banfield – Second Officer of Ulverstone Brigade

John Gledhill – Chief Officer of the Tasmania Fire Service

National Medal

A number of National Medals are presented each year to members of fire services around Australia and include:

National Medal – awarded for 15 years service

1st Clasp to the National Medal

– awarded for an additional 10 years service

2nd Clasp to the National Medal

– awarded for a further 10 years service

In 1999-2000 the following awards were received by TFS personnel.

Award	Number of Recipients
National Medal	56
Clasp to the National Medal	28
Second Clasp to the National Medal	2

Battered Branch Award

The Battered Branch is awarded each year to brigades who have demonstrated a high level of performance in both emergency fire operations and community involvement. Brigades nominated from all Regions are assessed by the Deputy Chief Officer for their outstanding performance during the year in the three representative brigade categories of career, vegetation and structural. The 1999-2000 Awards were presented to the following brigades:

A Platoon – Hobart Fire Brigade - Career

Longford Fire Brigade - Structural; and

Lenah Valley Fire Brigade - Vegetation.

Competitions

The Tasmanian Fire Brigades Competitions Association held competitions on six occasions throughout the State during the year. Local and interstate teams competed in a number of events using both modern and traditional firefighting equipment. This year's State Championships were hosted by Burnie Fire Brigade and the Open Championships hosted by the Devonport Fire Brigade. Teams from Hobart and Ulverstone travelled to Stawell to compete in the Victorian Championships.

The Tasmanian Volunteer Fire Brigades Association conducts regional and State competitions using contemporary fire fighting equipment in a number of events simulating operational activities. This year's State Competitions were hosted by the Longford Brigade.

Three members of the Hobart Fire Brigade participated in the World Firefighters Games in Paris, competing with over 5,000 athletes from various fire services around the globe.

Annual Charity Run

The 2000 TFS Charity Run was held over the period 28th - 31st March 2000. Approximately 60 TFS personnel and 20 charity representatives participated in the run from Burnie in the north west of the State to Hobart in the south raising a total of \$21,500.

The money raised was donated to "Parakaleo", a community organisation providing counselling to people effected by suicide and committed to a preventative and educative role within the community.

TFS Annual Conference

The Annual TFS Conference held in July 1999 in Launceston was again a great success. The conference provides a forum for career and volunteer personnel, uniformed and non-uniformed members to come together to discuss issues that are currently impacting on the delivery of fire services within Tasmania, nationally and internationally. Delegates were addressed by speakers on a wide range of issues with the keynote address on fireground safety presented by Euan Ferguson of the Country Fire Authority Victoria. The conference was attended by approximately 250 delegates.



OUR PEOPLE

Planned Outcomes/Achievements 2000-01

- **Fireground, the TFS' quarterly magazine, will be upgraded and delivered to the homes of all TFS personnel.**
- **An Enterprise Bargaining Agreement for employees covered by State Awards is planned for completion during the year. The major workgroups involved in these discussions are Engineering Services and Communications Divisions.**
- **To develop a framework for performance feedback, subsequent support and recognition for career members.**
- **The OH&S project will be ongoing with the focus on improving and consolidating the systems developed during 1999-2000 as well as progressing other key areas. In addition we will re-assess our OH&S performance standards to benchmark our progress since the 1998 OH&S Review.**
- **Develop and implement a Statewide system of Competency Based Training for volunteer operational personnel.**

RESOURCE Management



FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

To provide a dynamic, sound and timely financial management system.

Financial Overview

The Operating Surplus for the State Fire Commission for 1999-2000, after Abnormal Items, was \$1.1 million and on budget.

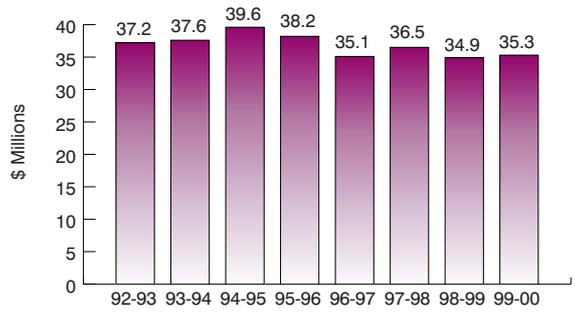
Operating Revenue for the twelve months to June 2000 was \$35.3 million compared to \$33.7 million for the same period last financial year. The major variations related to the State Government Contribution, Local Authorities Contributions and Fire Prevention Charges which increased by \$0.7, \$0.5 and \$0.4 million respectively.

Operating Expenses for the twelve months to June 2000 were \$34.2 million compared to \$31.8 million for the same period last financial year. The major variations related to Salaries and Accounting and Finance both of which increased by \$0.9 million respectively.

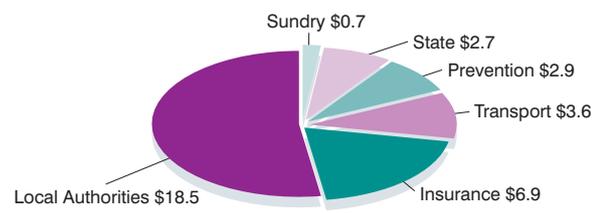
Net Assets for 1999-2000 totalled \$45.2 million as compared to \$44.4 million for 1998-99, an increase of \$0.8 million.

An overview of the major funding sources is detailed below.

Total Revenue in 1999-2000 Dollars



Revenue 1999-2000 (35.3 Million Dollars)



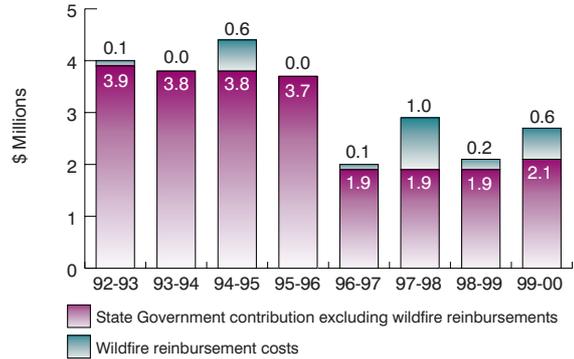
State Government Contribution

The Tasmanian Treasurer pays to the Commission, out of money appropriated by the Parliament for the purpose, such amount as the Treasurer determines is appropriate towards defraying the operating costs of the Commission. The contribution in 1999-2000 was \$2.7 million and represented eight per cent of the total revenue of the Service for 1999-2000.

The cost of fighting wildfires is partly funded by the State Government. From 1 July 1987, these costs have been funded by the State Government in the same year in which incurred. By arrangement with the Department of Treasury and Finance, the Commission is required to meet the first \$35,000 for wildfire fighting costs and the State Government meets the remainder. In 1999-2000, the State Government reimbursed the Commission \$636,000 and this amount is included in the State Government Contribution of \$2.7 million.

The State Government also reimbursed the Commission \$160,000 for the Tasmanian Ambulance Service occupancy cost of the Clarence Fire and Ambulance Station. This amount was offset against Accrued Revenue for 1998-99.

State Contribution in 1999-2000 Dollars



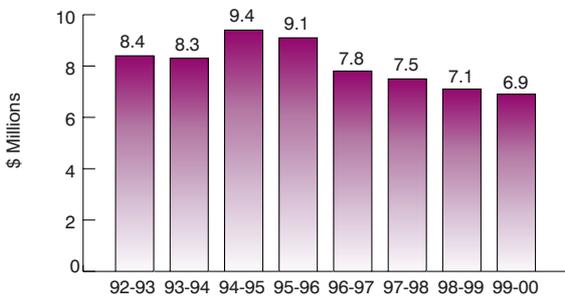
Commonwealth Government Contribution

The Commonwealth Government provided a small contribution of \$168,000 which was less than one per cent of the total revenue for 1999-2000. This was applied to the cost associated with providing fire prevention and protection to Commonwealth Government buildings.

Insurance Company Contributions

Insurance company contributions of \$6.9 million equated to 20 per cent of the total revenue. These funds were applied directly to operating costs. The contribution rate is an amount equal to two per cent of gross premium income on marine cargo insurance, 14 per cent on aviation hull insurance and 28 per cent of gross premium income on all other prescribed classes of insurance.

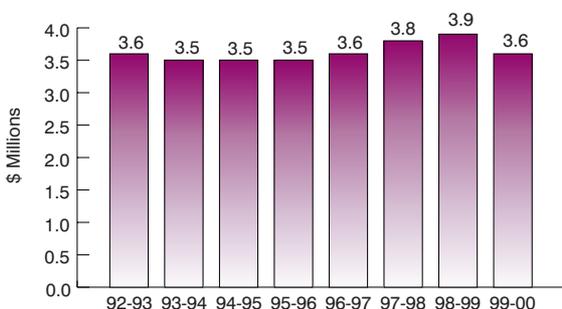
Insurance Contributions in 1999-2000 Dollars



Motor Vehicle Levy

The motor vehicle levy contribution of \$3.6 million collected by the Department of Transport represents 10 per cent of revenue and was applied directly to the cost of operating brigades. Distribution to brigades is on a pro-rata basis based on population distribution throughout the State. The general levy stands at \$11.00 and the pensioners levy is \$8.00 per vehicle effective from 1 July 1996. Motor cycles are excluded.

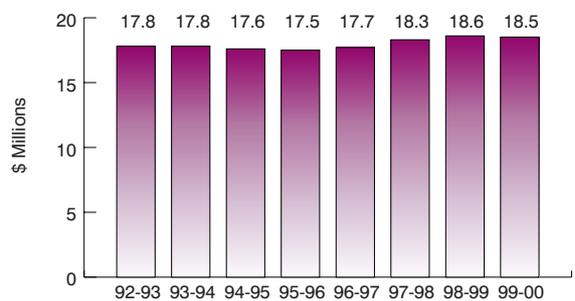
Department of Transport in 1999-2000 Dollars



Local Authorities

Local authorities collect fire contributions on properties on behalf of the Commission. Fire service contributions on properties for 1999-2000 amounted to \$18.5 million representing 52 per cent of total revenue. These funds were directly applied to the cost of operating brigades. The levels of contribution payable by ratepayers vary throughout the State according to whether the ratepayer is in an urban or country area. However, the objective of the demand on ratepayers is to ensure that an equitable contribution is applied to each ratepayer, based on the assessed annual value of their respective urban or country properties and the level of fire protection provided. Local authorities are paid a four per cent collection fee by the Commission and this amounted to \$740,000 in 1999-2000.

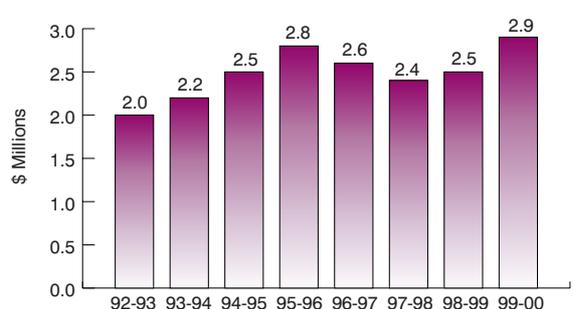
Local Authorities in 1999-2000 Dollars



Fire Prevention Charges

The Commission generates revenue through its community fire safety activities including the sale and servicing of fire safety equipment, commercial training, alarm rentals, inspection fees and avoidable false alarm fees. Revenue raised in 1999-2000 was \$2.9 million or eight per cent of total revenue.

Fire Prevention Charges in 1999-2000 Dollars



Sundry Income

Sundry income is derived from a number of sources including profit on sale of non-current assets, donations, interest received, rent and other sundry sources. Revenue raised in 1999-2000 was \$0.5 million or 1 per cent of total revenue.

GST Implementation

A small team from the Finance Branch was formed to plan, document and test the necessary changes to the finance system as a result of the pending implementation of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) on 1 July 2000.

Modifications were made to the existing financial software system and a total review of operating procedures was

undertaken to facilitate GST reporting requirements to the Australian Taxation Office.

Additional software was installed to enable the monthly preparation and subsequent electronic remittance of the Business Activity Statement to the Australian Taxation Office.

Final testing, of the software changes on the "live" system, are planned to commence in early July

Rationalisation

As part of an ongoing review and rationalisation of operations within the TFS the main Hobart store and the TasFire Equipment Moonah store were amalgamated. As a direct result significant time saving and increased productivity resulted.



PHYSICAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

To achieve physical resource management practices, that provide sufficient resources that are effective, safe, meet our legal obligations and ensure user confidence.

Building Program

During 1999-2000 construction of fire stations was completed at Grove, Buckland, Port Sorell, Maydena, Rowella and Stowport/Natone. Various upgrades of stations occurred throughout the State.

Training Facilities

Work is almost complete on the new training facilities in Youngtown near Launceston. This building will initially accommodate two Training Officers and two TasFire Training Instructors (Commercial). Three classrooms are already in use and the Breathing Apparatus Training areas are almost ready for use. Room is also available for another training room and additional offices if required in the future.

At present the only training prop at the site is the Urban Search and Rescue facility. The next priority is to develop new gas fired live firefighting props at the rear of the training building. The complex will be further developed over coming years.

Engineering Services Division

Appliance Production

In 1999-2000 Engineering Services completed its biggest ever fire appliance fabrication commitment since its establishment in the late 1980's. During the year 20 units were completed.

New Generation Tankers

This year saw the successful evaluation and launch of two new 4x4 tankers developed within the TFS. These tankers consisted of a crew cab heavy composite unit (tanker/pumper) and a crew cab 4x4 light tanker. The heavy composite 4x4 with its simultaneous high and low pressure pump of 2000 litre per minute capacity, twin high pressure hose reels and increased stowage is an ideal unit to lead the TFS into the new millennium. The crew cab light tanker will enhance the existing fleet of light tankers offering full crew capacity, twin hose reels and improved stowage.

Future Facilities

Following the successful sale of the Chapel Street workshop, building is nearly complete on the new mechanical and fabrication workshop at Cambridge. This will see both the Glenorchy (mechanical) and Bridgewater (fabrication) workshops moving to the new site in the 2000-01 financial year. The new multi-purpose complex will enable efficiencies to be realised by both workshops being housed in the same building.

Communications Division

Three major projects were undertaken by the Communications Division during the year:

Paging System extension

The paging system was extended and included the installation of eight new transmitter sites predominately on the north west coast. The extra coverage gained allowed 300 additional pagers to be issued to volunteer firefighters across the State. This significantly increased the communications efficiency of the affected brigades.

Communications Software and Hardware upgrade for Firecomm

The Division was responsible for the Firecomm communications centre software and hardware upgrades. This upgrade ensured Firecomm's operational effectiveness was

further enhanced by using the latest technology. While only minor changes were made to the layout and operation of the system, improvements in the operating speed and new system features aided in the reduction of call taking and dispatch times for incidents.

Fire Alarm Systems Upgrade

Fire Alarm system upgrades at fire stations saw the decommissioning of alarm receiving equipment that was 25 years old and the installation of either small local Fire Alarm Concentrators or in some cases the introduction of radio alarm transponder units (RATU). Both these technologies have helped the TFS improve our service delivery to clients as well as reducing direct costs by streamlining the level of equipment in fire stations.

Other items of note during the year:

- 40 extra hand held radios were issued resulting in all operational TFS vehicles accommodating a hand held radio.
- All career brigades have been issued with radio communications systems for breathing apparatus. A total of 60 systems were designed and manufactured by the Communications Division.
- No major outages of communications systems were experienced.





INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

To provide easily accessible, timely and accurate information to customers.

Year 2000 planning and testing of all TFS systems was by far the most important operationally and administratively critical task undertaken by Information Management in 1999. Extensive testing and, where necessary, upgrading of systems resulted in the TFS not experiencing any performance or functionality problems either prior to, during, or after Year 2000.

As a direct result of Year 2000 both maintenance agreements and contingency plans were reviewed and where necessary established for all critical systems.

Ongoing development and updating of the Resource Management System (RMS) resulted in significant improvements in personnel data management.

The TFS Web site (<http://www.fire.tas.gov.au/>) was launched in July 1999. The site consolidates information from all areas of the TFS. Up-to-date information on fire permits, warnings, current fire situations, media releases and mapping of fire locations in Tasmania is provided. Information in relation to fire safety, recruitment and general information in regard to the State Fire Commission, the TFS and the State Fire Management Council is also provided.

An Intranet was also established to provide staff with easy access to corporate data.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Planned Outcomes/Achievements 2000-01

- **Facilities at Cambridge are expected to be completed and fully operational. Training facilities at Youngtown will also be completed with further developments planned for the site over the next few years**
- **Major building projects for 2000-01 include construction of the combined Fire and Ambulance Stations at Strahan and Dunalley plus new stations at Mole Creek, Bagdad and Hadspen.**
- **The paging system will be further extended on the west and north west coasts as well as King and Flinders Islands resulting in paging services being available for nearly all brigades throughout the State.**



STATE FIRE MANAGEMENT Council



The Council has the following functions:

- to develop a State vegetation fire management policy to be used as the basis for all fire management planning;

- to advise and report regularly to the Minister on such matters relating to the administration of the Act, as it applies to vegetation fire management, as are referred to it by the Minister and on such matters concerning vegetation fire management as, in the opinion of the Council, should be brought to the attention of the Minister;

- to advise the Commission on such matters relating to the prevention and extinguishment of vegetation fires as are referred to it by the Commission or land managers and on such other matters as, in the opinion of the Council, should be brought to the attention of the Commission;

- to perform such other functions relating to the prevention or extinguishment of vegetation fires as the Minister may direct; and

- to provide an annual report to the Minister on its activities, for inclusion in the Annual Report of the Commission.

The State Fire Management Council is established under Section 14 of the *Fire Service Act 1979*. The Council comprises:

Chairperson nominated by the Minister (Maurice Geard);

Chief Officer of the Tasmania Fire Service (John Gledhill);

Chief Executive Officer of the Forestry Corporation (Evan Rolley);

General Manager of National Parks and Wildlife (Peter Williams);

Nominee of the Chief Officer, Tasmania Fire Service (Peter Alexander);

Nominee of the Chief Executive Officer

of the Forestry Corporation (Dick Chuter);

Nominee of the Director of National Parks and Wildlife (Tony Blanks);

Nominee of the Tasmanian Farmers and Graziers Association (Mike Crisp);

Nominee of the Forest Industries Association of Tasmania (Chris Deagan); and

Nominee of the Local Government Association of Tasmania (John Munro)

STATE FIRE MANAGEMENT COUNCIL Annual Report

As Chairman of the State Fire Management Council, I am pleased to report on a year of consolidation for the Council that met four times. Inaugural members Mr Des Tillack (LGAT), Mr Ross Hills (FIAT) and Mr Max Kitchell (PWS) resigned and were replaced by Mr J D Munro, Mr C Deagan and Mr P F Williams, respectively.

Council adopted the "Fire Management Specifications for Forest Plantations". These complement the existing "Tasmania Fire Service Planning Conditions and Guidelines for Subdivisions in Bushfire Prone Areas". Working in tandem, these two documents provide appropriate advice to people wishing to either develop buildings or plantations in or beside the bush. The plantations document provides common sense standards for providing buffers, access and water supplies for new plantations, and could easily be used for existing plantings.

SFMC became a member of the State Air Quality Policy Consultative Committee which was established by the Board of Environmental Management and Pollution Control as a stakeholder group to assist in policy development. Many parts of Tasmania have occasional poor air quality and some places regularly experience problems from smoke. Although the major culprit is the domestic wood heater and open fire places, SFMC is keen to work with the community to ensure that smoke from land management uses is better managed and has reduced negative impacts on the community. The draft policy for air quality will be examined by SFMC in the coming year.

The major initiative for 1999-2000, was the commencement of the "Guide to Best Fire Management Practice for Land Managers in Tasmania". This project is to create a web-based resource for use by anyone seeking guidance on an aspect of fire use in Tasmania. The approach is to use the web interface to give people access to the best documents and information on fire use, simply and efficiently.

Forestry Tasmania has completed the major conceptual work and further development will continue this year and will be accessible from the SFMC web site. The majority of the project should be completed in 2000-01.



M S Geard
Chairman

29 September 2000

The accompanying financial statements of the State Fire Commission have been prepared in compliance with the provisions of the *Fire Service Act 1979* from proper accounts and records.

In the opinion of the Commissioners of the State Fire Commission;

- a) the financial statements are drawn up so as to give a true and fair view of the results and cash flows for the period 1 July 1999 to 30 June 2000 and the statement of affairs at 30 June 2000 of the State Fire Commission;
- b) the accounts have been made out in accordance with the provisions of the *Fire Service Act 1979*, and
- c) at the date of this statement, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Commission will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

At the date of signing we are not aware of any circumstances which would render the particulars in the financial statements misleading or inaccurate.



J.B. Gledhill BSc. F.I.Fire E. AFSM

CHIEF OFFICER



E.A. Marchant BSc. BCom.

COMMISSION MEMBER

31 August 2000

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT

To the Members of the State Fire Commission

Scope

I have audited the financial report of the State Fire Commission comprising Operating, Financial Position and Cash Flows Statements and notes thereto, for the year ended 30 June 2000. The Members of the State Fire Commission are responsible for the financial report. I have conducted an independent audit of the financial report in order to express an opinion on it to the Members.

The audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free of material misstatement. My procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial report, and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion whether, in all material respects, the financial report is presented fairly in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, other mandatory professional reporting requirements and applicable so as to present a view which is consistent with my understanding of the financial position of the State Fire Commission, the results of its operations and its cash flows.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

Audit Opinion

In my opinion the financial report presents fairly in accordance with applicable legislation, Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements, the financial position of the State Fire Commission as at 30 June 2000, and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended.



A J McHugh
AUDITOR-GENERAL

25 September 2000

HOBART

STATEMENT OF

Financial Performance

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2000

	Note	2000 \$'000	1999 \$'000
OPERATING REVENUE			
Insurance Companies	6	6,938	6,850
Local Authorities	7	18,493	17,954
State Government Contribution	8	2,741	1,982
Commonwealth Government Contribution	8	168	168
Department of Transport	9	3,640	3,673
Fire Prevention Charges	10	2,899	2,504
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		34,879	33,131
Sundry Income	11	450	608
Total Revenue		35,329	33,739
OPERATING EXPENSES			
Salaries, Wages and Related Expenses	12, 1(j)	20,738	19,824
Public Relations, Subscriptions and Consultants	13	684	379
Training and Education		479	411
Operations	14	3,379	3,314
Protective Clothing and Uniforms	15	1,027	1,019
Accounting and Finance	16	6,323	5,449
Repairs and Maintenance	17	1,211	1,105
Equipment under \$1,000	18	374	269
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Total Operating Expenses		34,215	31,770
Operating Surplus		1,114	1,969
Accumulated Surpluses at Beginning of Financial Year		37,228	4,966
Transfers from Reserves			
Capital Development Reserve	21(a)	-	28,001
Depreciation Fund	20	-	2,292
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Total available for appropriation		38,342	37,228
Accumulated Surpluses at End of Financial Year		38,342	37,228

The Financial Statements are to be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes to the accounts.

STATEMENT OF

Financial Position

AS AT 30 JUNE 2000

	Note	2000 \$'000	1999 \$'000
CURRENT ASSETS			
Investments	1(k), 5	1,500	-
Stores	1(c)	627	602
Trade Debtors	1(d), 5	519	378
Less Provision for Doubtful Debts	19	-10	-10
Cash at Bank	2, 5	534	2,968
Cash on Hand		8	9
Accrued Revenue		2,214	1,538
Prepayments		239	405
Unamortised Discount on Loans		4	24
Total Current Assets		5,635	5,914
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Work in Progress	1(e), 3	1,968	1,549
Land & Buildings	1(f), 4	28,679	28,626
Motor Vehicles	4	15,662	16,373
Plant & Equipment	1(g), 4	5,781	5,652
Total Non-Current Assets		52,090	52,200
TOTAL ASSETS		57,725	58,114
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Accrued Expenses	1(o), 5	1,093	1,360
Sundry Creditors	1(o), 5	804	836
Capital Works Commitments	1(o), 3	-	1,084
Provision for Long Service Leave	1(h)	3,211	3,059
Provision for Annual Leave	1(i)	1,491	1,424
Loans	1(n), 5	1,830	2,868
Total Current Liabilities		8,429	10,631
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Provision for Long Service Leave	1(h)	249	246
Loans	1(n), 5	3,879	2,841
Total Non-Current Liabilities		4,128	3,087
TOTAL LIABILITIES		12,557	13,718
NET ASSETS		45,168	44,396
EQUITY			
Capital			
General Capital	1(l)	5,464	5,464
Reserves			
Asset Revaluation Reserve	1(f), 21(b)	1,362	1,704
Accumulated Surpluses		38,342	37,228
TOTAL EQUITY		45,168	44,396

The Financial Statements are to be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes to the accounts.


STATEMENT OF

Cash Flows

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2000

	Note	2000 \$'000	1999 \$'000
Cash Flows from Operating Activities			
Cash Receipts in the course of Operations		34,011	33,208
Cash Payments in the course of Operations		-30,131	-27,434
Interest Paid		-585	-594
Interest Received		75	78
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Net Cash provided by Operating Activities	23(b)	3,370	5,258
Cash Flows from Investing Activities			
(Payment)/Proceeds in Investments		-1,500	1,600
Proceeds from Sale of Equipment		1,567	1,097
Payments for Property, Plant and Equipment		-5,872	-6,192
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Net Cash used in Investing Activities		-5,805	-3,495
Net Decrease in Cash Held		-2,435	1,763
Cash at the Beginning of the Financial Period		<hr/> 2,977	<hr/> 1,214
Cash at the End of the Financial Period	23(a)	<hr/> 542	<hr/> 2,977

The Financial Statements are to be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes to the accounts.

1. Statement of Accounting Policies

(a) Basis of Financial Statements

The financial report is a general purpose financial report which has been prepared in accordance with Accounting Standards, Urgent Issues Group Consensus Views, and other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board. It has been prepared on the basis of historical costs except for the revaluation of land and buildings, and does not take into account changing money values. Accounting policies used are consistent with those of the prior year.

(b) System of Accounting

The accompanying financial statements are prepared in accordance with the accrual basis of accounting that brings to account known assets and liabilities at balance date. All amounts shown in the financial statements are in thousands of dollars. The system of accounting complies with the requirements of the *Fire Service Act 1979*.

(c) Stores

Consumable stores are expensed at the time of purchase. Stock on hand is valued at average cost. The amount of stock held as at 30 June 2000 was \$627,283 and includes \$431,561 held for issue within the State Fire Commission and \$195,722 held for sale to the general public.

(d) Trade Debtors

Trade debtors are generally settled within 60 days and are carried at amounts due. The collectability of debts is assessed at year-end and a specific provision is made for any doubtful accounts. In addition a general provision of 1.9% of debtors outstanding is maintained. The carrying amount of trade debtors approximates net fair value.

(e) Work in Progress

Work in Progress is valued at the prime cost of material and labour for work to date and includes Capital Works Commitments incurred but unpaid at year-end.

(f) Land and Buildings

Freehold land and buildings are valued at cost or municipal valuation. Surpluses arising from municipal revaluations of property subsequent to 1 July 1985 are transferred to the Asset Revaluation Reserve if and when initial costs are exceeded. Land and buildings are revalued progressively in a systematic manner by the Valuer-General and the process, which is both independent and consistent, follows the revaluation cycle of the Valuer-General. This results in a part of the class of assets being re-valued, without re-valuing the entire class of assets.

Where land and/or buildings have been purchased during the year, or are maintained in capital works in progress, it is policy not to adjust the value of the asset to reflect the valuation notices.

Costs incurred in property, plant and equipment subsequent to initial acquisitions are capitalised when it is probable that future economic benefits, in excess of the originally assessed performance of the assets will flow to the Commission in future years. Where these costs represent separate components they are accounted for as separate assets and are separately depreciated over their useful lives.

1. Statement of Accounting Policies (continued)**(g) Plant and Equipment**

Items of plant and equipment with a purchase price of less than \$1,000 are expensed at time of purchase. As from 1 July 1996 items of plant and equipment with a prime cost of \$1,000 or more are shown at cost less depreciation and are written off over their expected useful life to the Commission on a straight line basis. Equipment is not depreciated until full operational status is attained.

(h) Provision for Long Service Leave

Provision for long service leave is made for all employees. No cash reserve has been set aside to meet commitments from the Provision for Long Service Leave. Commitments will be met as they fall due from revenue at that time. The current liability for long service leave represents entitlements for Officers with service in excess of nine years. The non-current liability represents accrued leave for Officers with service less than nine years and has been discounted using the rates attached to national government securities at balance date, which most closely match the terms of maturity of the related liabilities.

In determining the liability for employee entitlements, consideration has been given to future increases in wage and salary rates, and experiences with staff departures. Related on costs have also been included in the liability.

(i) Provision for Annual Leave

The provision represents employee entitlements due and accrued as at 30 June 2000. The provision has been calculated on nominal amounts based on current wage and salary rates and includes related on costs.

(j) Superannuation

The State Fire Commission provided \$2,077,122 for superannuation in 2000. The Commission operates a fully funded Superannuation Scheme for operational employees. This is a managed fund administered by NSP Buck Pty. Ltd. In addition superannuation is provided to State Servants through the Retirement Benefits Fund Board (RBF). The total superannuation contribution provided in 2000 comprised:

	2000	1999
	\$'000	\$'000
Firefighters - Superannuation	1,691	1,635
State Public Servants - Superannuation	386	355
TOTAL	2,077	1,990

Prior to 1 July 1986 the State Fire Commission maintained its own fully funded superannuation scheme for Commission employees who contributed to the RBF. As at 30 June 1986 the provision had accumulated to \$2,447,447 and this amount was recorded in the Commission's accounts. As at 1 July 1986 accounting for RBF Superannuation entitlements was transferred to the State Treasury. A payment representing the provision as at 30 June 1986 of \$2,447,447 was made to the State Treasury on the condition that the Government would fund the current and future superannuation liability of Commission employees.

(k) Investments

The Commission conducts its investment and loan programs with the Tasmanian Public Finance Corporation (Tascorp) and private investment managers.

Investments are carried at the face value of the amounts deposited. The carrying value of investments approximates the net fair value. Interest revenue is accrued at the market or contractual rate.

(l) General Capital

The General Capital represents the net assets taken up by the State Fire Commission on conversion to accrual accounting from 1 July 1985. Prior to that date the Commission presented its annual accounts on the basis of receipts and payments.

(m) Sick Leave

No amount is shown for non-vested sick leave. On the basis of previous experience, namely sick leave of 2,240 days per annum, the estimated liability of \$246,019 is not material in comparison with total liabilities.

The total average number of hours taken per person in 2000 was 35.3 as compared to 40.4 in 1999.

(n) Loans

Loans are carried on the statement of financial position at their principal amount. The carrying amounts of the bank loans approximates their net fair value. Interest expense is accrued at the contracted rate and included in "Accrued Expenses."

(o) Sundry Creditors, Accrued Expenses and Commitments.

Liabilities are recognised for amounts to be paid in the future for goods and services received, whether or not billed to the Commission. Trade accounts payable are normally settled within 60 days. The carrying amount of accounts payable approximates to fair value.

(p) Provision for Depreciation

Items of property, plant and equipment, including land and buildings, are depreciated over their estimated useful lives.

All items are depreciated using the straight line method of depreciation at the following range of rates:

Asset Class	Range of Rates
Land and Buildings	2.5% - 3.3%
Motor Vehicles and Appliances	4% - 25%
Fire Fighting Equipment	20%
Workshop and Other Equipment	20%
Radio and Communication Equipment	10%
Office Furniture and Other Equipment	33.3%
Computers	10% - 33.3%

Assets are depreciated from the date of acquisition or, in respect of internally constructed assets, from the time an asset is completed and held ready for use.

2. Cash, Short Term Deposits and Bank Overdrafts

The Commission operates its own bank account and all cash transactions are recorded through this account.

Cash, short-term deposits and bank overdrafts are carried at face value of the amounts deposited or drawn. The carrying amounts of cash, short-term deposits and bank overdrafts approximates net fair value. Interest revenue is accrued at the market or contractual rate.

3. Work in Progress/Capital Works Commitments

Capital Works in Progress in 2000 represents capital expenditure to date of \$1,967,898.

In 1999 Capital Works in progress amounted to \$1,548,725 that included \$1,083,846 of commitments not brought to account in this financial year.

Commitments for Capital Expenditure:

At the reporting date, the State Fire Commission had recorded the following capital commitments:

	1999-00 \$'000	1998-99 \$'000
Capital Commitments	855	-

4. Non-Current Assets

Plant and Equipment comprises the following major categories of assets: Fire Fighting Equipment, Workshop and Other Equipment, Radio and Communications Equipment, Office Furniture and Equipment and Computer Equipment.

For the 1999-2000 financial year the following additions, revaluations and disposals were made:-

NON-CURRENT ASSETS AT COST/REVALUATION

	Balance 30 June 99	Purchases	Work in Progress Transfers	Removal Internal Costs	Revaluations/ Devaluations	Disposals	Balance 30 June 00
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Land	5,331	-	-		33	-437	4,927
Buildings	25,466	1,652	162		-810	-635	25,836
Motor Vehicles	29,722	1,503	-	-26		-1,287	29,912
Fire Fighting	1,700	34	-		-	-	1,734
Workshop & Other	796	33	-		-	-3	825
Radio and Communication	6,419	912	-	-29		-3	7,300
Office Furniture and Other	561	31	-		-	-	592
Computer	3,269	148	5		-	-34	3,387
Total	73,264	4,313	167	-55	-777	-2,399	74,513

Due to effects of rounding some totals may not cross balance.

Land and Buildings are at cost/revaluation whilst the remaining assets are at cost

NON-CURRENT ASSETS REVALUATIONS

Net revaluation decrements of \$55,184 were made in 2000 for Fabrication of Motor Vehicles and Radio and Communications as compared to \$56,773 in 1999.

PROVISION FOR DEPRECIATION

	Balance 30 Jun 99	Depreciation	Revaluations	Disposals	Balance 30 Jun 00
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Buildings	2,171	381	-380	-89	2,084
Motor Vehicles	13,349	1,232	-	-332	14,250
Fire Fighting	1,058	93	-	-	1,151
Workshop & Other	645	49	-	-1	693
Radio & Communication	2,676	524	-	-3	3,197
Office Furniture & Other	461	41	-	-	503
Computer	2,253	294	-	-34	2,513
Total	22,613	2,615	-380	-458	24,390

Proceeds - Sale of Assets 2000 \$1,566,811

Due to effects of rounding some totals may not cross balance.

5. Additional financial instruments disclosures

The Commission's exposure to interest rate risk and the effective weighted average interest rate for classes of financial assets and liabilities for 1999-00 are detailed below:

	Non Interest Bearing	Floating Interest Rate	Fixed Interest 1 year or less	Maturing Over 1 year to 5 years	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Financial Assets					
Cash	-	534	-	-	534
Trade Debtors	519	-	-	-	519
Investments	-	-	1,500	-	1,500
	<u>519</u>	<u>534</u>	<u>1,500</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,553</u>
Weighted Average Interest Rate	-	6.28%	6.12%	-	-
Financial Liabilities					
Bank overdrafts and loans	-	-	1,830	3,879	5,709
Sundry Creditors	804	-	-	-	804
Accrued Expenses	1,093	-	-	-	1,093
	<u>1,897</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,830</u>	<u>3,879</u>	<u>7,606</u>
Weighted Average Interest Rate	-	-	12.5%	8.62%	-

5. Additional financial instruments disclosures (continued)

Comparative figures for 1998-99 are detailed below:

	Non Interest Bearing	Floating Interest Rate	Fixed Interest 1 year or less	Maturing Over 1 year to 5 years	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Financial Assets					
Cash	-	2,968	-	-	2,968
Trade Debtors	378	-	-	-	378
Investments	-	-	-	-	-
	<u>378</u>	<u>2,968</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,346</u>
Weighted Average Interest Rate	-	5.05%	-	-	-
Financial Liabilities					
Bank overdrafts and loans	-	-	2,868	2,841	5,709
Sundry Creditors	836	-	-	-	836
Accrued Expenses	1,360	-	-	-	1,360
	<u>2,196</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,868</u>	<u>2,841</u>	<u>7,905</u>
Weighted Average Interest Rate	-	-	9.65%	10.24%	-

Bank Overdraft

The bank overdraft of the State Fire Commission is unsecured and subject to annual review.

Loans

Since 1986, all loan raising has been arranged through the Tasmanian Public Finance Corporation (Tascorp).

All loans are recorded in \$A. The loan amount in current liabilities comprises the portions of the loans payable within one year. The non-current loan balance represents the portion of the loans maturing over one to five years.

Credit Risk Exposures

Credit risk represents the loss that would be recognised if counterparties failed to perform as contracted.

The credit risk on financial assets excluding investments, of the Commission, which has been recognised on the statement of financial affairs, is the carrying amount, net of any provision for doubtful debts.

The State Fire Commission minimises credit risk by undertaking transactions with a large number of customers and counterparties.

6. Insurance Companies

Contributions are received from insurance companies in respect of premium income on certain prescribed classes of insurance where the risks insured are situated within Tasmania. Contributions are received quarterly in accordance with an approved lodgment return. The current insurance levy is 28 per cent and this was last increased from 14 per cent in October 1990.

7. Local Authorities

Contributions are received from Municipalities through a fire levy raised on properties. A minimum levy of \$25 has applied since 1991 in order to provide additional funds to re-equip volunteer brigades.

8. Payments from State and Commonwealth Governments

Under Section 101 of the *Fire Service Act 1979* the Treasurer must pay out of moneys appropriated by the Parliament, such amounts as the Treasurer determines is appropriate towards the operating costs of the Commission.

The Commonwealth Government pays to the Commission an annual contribution towards the operating cost of brigades.

Funds provided to the Commission are detailed below:-

	2000 \$'000	1999 \$'000
State Government		
General Contribution	2,265	1,809
Less Accrued Revenue 1998-99	160	-
	<hr/> 2,105	<hr/> 1,809
Wildfire Fighting reimbursements	636	173
	<hr/> 2,741	<hr/> 1,982
 Commonwealth Government Contribution		
	<hr/> 168	<hr/> 168

An amount of \$160,000 being Tasmanian Ambulance Service shared occupancy cost at the Clarence Station was included as Accrued Revenue last financial year. The State Government Contribution this financial year included an amount of \$160,000 to extinguish the debt owed by Tasmanian Ambulance Service.

9. Department of Transport

The State Fire Commission receives income raised through a fire levy applied to all registered vehicles. This is collected by the Department of Transport via the vehicle registration fee and forwarded to the State Fire Commission. The current fire levy raised through vehicle registration is \$11 per vehicle and this was last increased from \$10 in July 1996.

10. Fire Prevention Charges

Revenue is raised by the Commission's Service Divisions and Brigades through the sale, inspection, recharging and repair of fire safety equipment throughout the State. Revenue is recorded when the goods or services are provided.

	2000	1999
	\$'000	\$'000
Alarm Rental	623	600
Avoidable False Alarms	132	111
Commercial Training	780	568
Commercial – Evacuation Planning	96	-
Inspection Fees – TasFire Equipment	558	561
Inspection Fees – Building Safety	112	116
Sale of Fire Safety Services and Equipment	1,187	1,163
Less Cost of Goods Sold	589	615
	<u>598</u>	<u>548</u>
TOTAL	<u>2,899</u>	<u>2,504</u>

11. Sundry Income

	2000	1999
	\$'000	\$'000
Contribution by Tasmanian Ambulance Service*	-	160
Donations	8	29
Interest Received	75	78
Insurance Recoveries	41	25
Rent	89	91
Wildfire Fighting	-	3
Worker's Compensation Refunds	77	97
Other	160	125
TOTAL	<u>450</u>	<u>608</u>

*Provided by Tasmanian Ambulance Service to enable shared occupancy at the Clarence Station.

12. Salaries Wages and Related Expenses

	2000	1999
	\$'000	\$'000
Salaries, Wages and Allowances	15,200	14,443
Payroll Tax	1,270	1,268
Annual Leave	1,706	1,594
Long Service Leave	485	529
Superannuation	2,077	1,990
TOTAL	<u>20,738</u>	<u>19,824</u>

13. Public Relations, Subscriptions and Consultants

	2000	1999
	\$'000	\$'000
Advertising	403	188
Grants and Donations	63	36
Functions	64	49
Professional Fees	68	42
Subscriptions	74	53
Other	12	11
TOTAL	<u>684</u>	<u>379</u>

14. Operations

	2000	1999
	\$'000	\$'000
Printing and Stationery	160	130
Consumables	276	226
Electricity	325	368
Hire of Equipment	21	25
Office Cleaning	95	101
Municipal Rates	106	102
Rental of Premises	21	26
Wildfire Fighting Reimbursement	207	111
Motor Vehicle Expenses	728	694
Removal Expenses	32	20
Travel Expenses	188	191
Communication Expenses	911	974
Computer Expenses	218	234
Fire Suppression & Control	12	29
Other	79	83
TOTAL	3,379	3,314

15. Protective Clothing and Uniforms

	2000	1999
	\$'000	\$'000
Protective Clothing	749	723
Uniforms	278	296
TOTAL	1,027	1,019

16. Accounting and Finance

	2000	1999
	\$'000	\$'000
Loss on Sale of Non-Current Assets		
Gross Proceeds	1,567	1,097
Less Net Asset Value	1,941	1,257
	374	160
Audit Fees	21	21
Fringe Benefits Tax	141	237
Insurance	1,030	512
Interest	584	594
Local Government Collection Fees	740	718
Pensioner Rebates (Municipal)	512	486
Pensioner Rebates (Transport)	203	199
Depreciation	2,615	2,499
Stock Expenses and Write Offs	64	-4
Other	39	27
TOTAL	6,323	5,449

17. Repairs and Maintenance

	2000	1999
	\$'000	\$'000
Land and Buildings	390	342
Motor Vehicles	627	585
Fire Fighting Equipment	83	64
Communication Expenses	53	55
Office Furniture	21	24
Workshop Equipment	21	22
Computer Equipment	16	13
TOTAL	1,211	1,105

18. Equipment Purchases under \$1,000

	2000	1999
	\$'000	\$'000
Computer Equipment	27	19
Fire Fighting Equipment	151	128
Office Furniture and Related Equipment	100	55
Communication Expenses	46	32
Workshop Equipment	39	33
Other	11	2
TOTAL	374	269

19. Provision for Doubtful Debts

	2000	1999
	\$'000	\$'000
Accumulated Balance 1 July 1999	10	10
Plus Provision for 1999-00	2	5
	12	15
Less Bad Debts Written Off	-2	-5
Accumulated Balance 30 June 2000	10	10

20. Depreciation Fund

The requirement to operate a Depreciation Fund under the *Fire Service Act 1979* was removed with the proclamation of the *Fire Service Reform Act 1995*. Brought forward balances from the 1997-98 Financial Year have been transferred to Accumulated Surpluses in 1998-99.

21. Reserves

(a) Capital Development Reserve

A re-equipment program for brigades was commenced in 1990-91, based upon increased contributions from Local Authorities and a proportion of Motor Vehicle Levies. The additional funds attributable to these increases have been transferred to a reserve established to recognise the capital development program.

The basis of calculating the amount to be transferred to the Capital Development Reserve was changed in 1992-93. Contributions from Local Authorities and Motor Vehicle Levies received in the base year of 1990-91 were adjusted for movements in the Consumer Price Index and compared with comparable receipts for the current year to determine the amount to be transferred to the Reserve.

Given the significant shift in funding over the past eight years the reserve is not considered to be a necessary requirement. Brought forward balances from the 1997-98 Financial Year have been transferred to Accumulated Surpluses in 1998-99.

	2000 \$'000	1999 \$'000
Accumulated Balance 1 July 1999		28,001
Plus Transfer from Accumulated Surpluses	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
		28,001
Less: Transferred to Accumulated Surpluses	-	28,001
Accumulated Balance 30 June 2000	<hr/>	<hr/>
	-	-
(b) Asset Revaluation Reserve		
Accumulated Balance 1 July 1999	1,704	1,760
Less Revaluation of Assets	<hr/>	<hr/>
	-342	-56
Accumulated Balance 30 June 2000	<hr/>	<hr/>
	1,362	1,704

22. Remuneration of Commissioners

Commissioners not employed under the *Tasmanian State Service Act 1984* are paid a sitting fee and are reimbursed for travel costs. The total number of Commissioners is seven and of this number three are State Servants.

The total remuneration of each of the four Non State Servant Commissioners was within the remuneration band \$0 to \$9,999.

23. Notes to the Statement of Cash Flows**(a) Reconciliation of Cash**

For the purpose of the Statement of Cash Flows, cash includes cash on hand and at bank. Cash as at the end of the financial year as shown in the Statement of Cash Flows is reconciled to the related items in the Statement of Financial Position as follows:-

Current and 11am Call Account
On hand

2000
\$'000

1999
\$'000

534	2,968
8	9
<u>542</u>	<u>2,977</u>

(b) Reconciliation of Operating Surplus, to cash provided by Operating Activities

Operating Surplus
Add (less) non-cash items:
Depreciation
(Profit)/Loss on disposal of assets
Amortisation of discount
Provision for Doubtful Debts
Net cash used in operating activities
before change in Assets and Liabilities

1,114	1,969
2,615	2,499
374	160
19	19
-	-
<u>4,122</u>	<u>4,647</u>

Changes in assets and liabilities during the financial period
(Increase)/Decrease in debtors
(Increase)/Decrease in accrued revenue
(Increase)/Decrease in inventory
(Increase)/Decrease in prepayments
Increase/(Decrease) in creditors/accruals

-140	106
-675	50
-25	75
166	-157
-300	482

Increase/(Decrease) in provisions

222	55
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Net cash from operating activities

<u>3,370</u>	<u>5,258</u>
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(c) Overdraft Facility

The State Fire Commission has access to an overdraft facility of \$2,500,000. As at 30 June 2000, none of this liability was utilised.