



**RURAL FIRE BRIGADES ASSOCIATION
QUEENSLAND INC.** ABN. 37 417 474 709

**General Manager
Annual General Meeting Report
For October 2017**

The RFBAQ has had another successful year externally with the RFBAQ/QFES PPB Grant Scheme, PPB Roadshow and now the real possibility of developing a co-operative funding model that will allow @600 Fire Brigades to access the things money can buy without the need of a bank account.

This will be a huge step forward for these brigades and also return some of the money raised locally from the Emergency Management Levy to be spent in the local shops. These are all RFBAQ initiatives that have been supported by the RFSQ/QFES.

In addition to this, the legal Status of brigades conversation is starting in the new year. Possibly one of the most important pieces of work the RFBAQ has ever undertaken and the most seminal since the abolition of the Rural Fires Board. Another RFBAQ initiative.

With the new 8 slip on unit grant process added to the 66 PPB funded grant applications and our normal RFBAQ grant process; we can certainly say that this year the RFBAQ delivered more equipment for more brigades than in any other time in the Associations history. This is something that all Representatives should be proud of. That you have contributed to building community defence across the whole of Queensland not only through equipment, but also through building community awareness. This was in the form of the RFBAQ Yellow truck TV commercial and the very popular Bushy magnets.

Internally, a very rigorous managing of the new flexible staffing module allowed for the projected savings in staff hours to be well and truly exceeded. This was at no impact to the customer experience and provided a good basis for the forecast RFBAQ move in 2018.

The lease on our current building in Mary Street Gympie is coming to a close and there has been no positive movement from council in providing a safe carpark arrangement for RFBAQ staff who work after dark.

The State Government has kindly offered to lease the RFBAQ a portion of their old Forestry building on the north side of Gympie. You will notice that in the budget, provision has been made for minor improvements to the building. These costs will be recovered within 3 years as the rental rate is just over half of what we currently pay in Mary Street.

Moving to a building that specifically meets our needs will allow us to have a single front desk, single photocopier, single server room as opposed to a duplication in our current premises.

This will give the RFBAQ a more permanent home with a 4 x 5 year lease option and also allow the RFBAQ staff to easily access safe and secure well-lit carparks that adjoin their workplace.

It is quite early in the negotiations at present, but we are working well with the department to try and find a good outcome for the association.

To conclude, I believe the RFBAQ externally and internally are in a sound position, and that this will allow us to continue to positively advocate on behalf of the brigades and still be flexible enough to take advantage of opportunities presented.