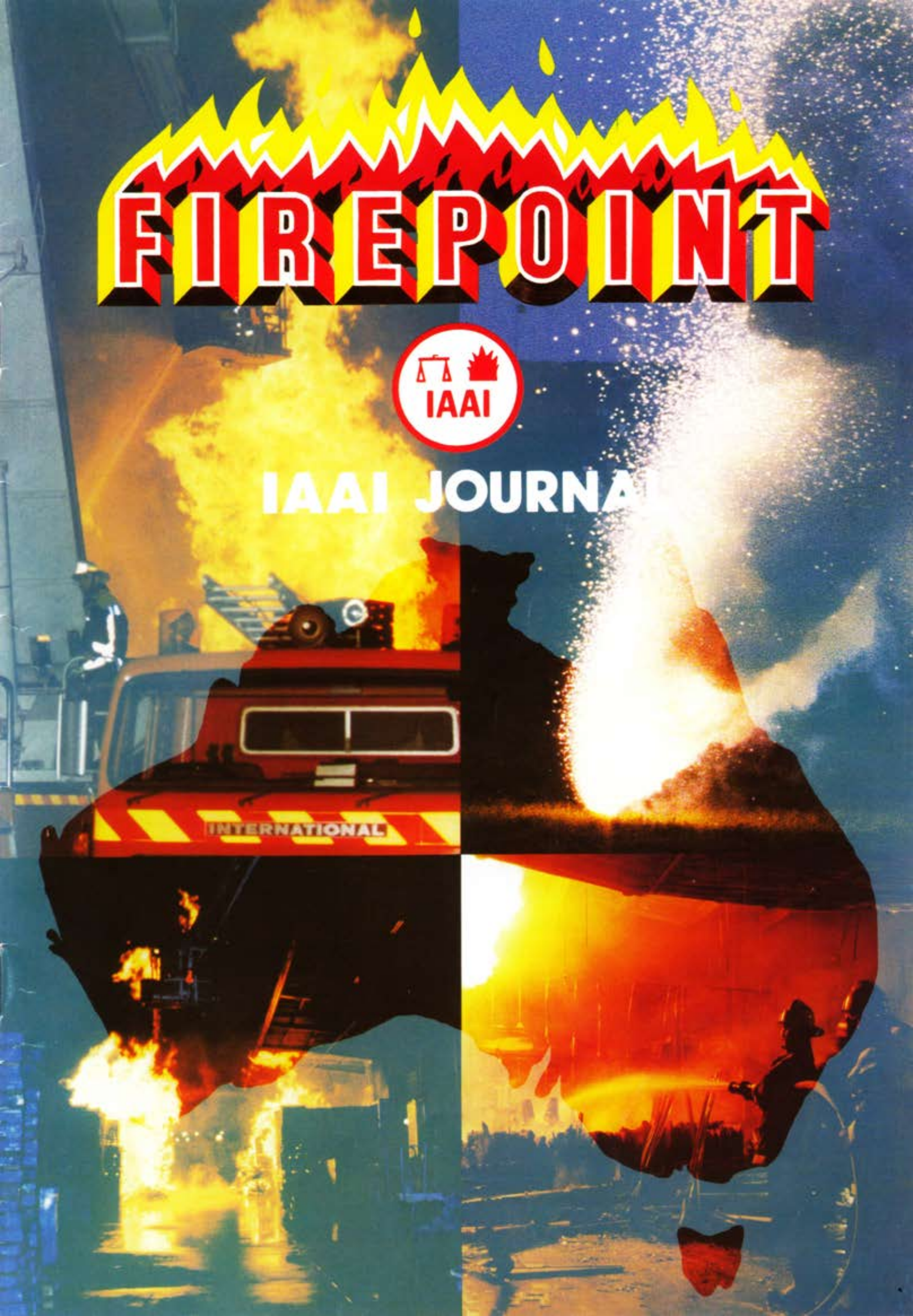


FIREPOINT



IAAI JOURNAL



Firepoint

ISSN 1035 2287

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**FIREPOINT: IF YOU HAVEN'T PAID YOUR FEES FOR THE
CURRENT YEAR, PLEASE DO SO NOW.**

EDITORIAL

Both Victoria and Queensland are hosting major seminars in the weeks ahead; details are included in this issue for the Queensland seminar. There is also a reminder for the Victorian seminar, which was detailed in a flyer with our last issue.

The article by Richard Woods details firefighter arson. We have a follow up article on this topic scheduled for the next issue.

And if you are in need of a little light relief, see our lawyer story on page 13.

Best wishes to you all

Wal Stern



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Issue No. 79, ISSN 1035 2287

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Tackling Wildfire Firefighter Arson An Australian approach.

Summary of a presentation provided to the 2009 IAAI Annual Training Conference Arlington Texas

All Fire Services need to establish effective methods and strategies to deal with the problem of Firefighter Wildfire arson. This paper provides a viewpoint from the Australian Fire Service perspective of the issue where it relates to the Wildland scene. Based on case experience, evidence gathered from research conducted in Australia and overseas, this paper focuses on the motives behind the problem and some strategies that can be adopted by Fire Agencies to address it.

Whilst members of the community who seek to satisfy their need to embezzle funds are attracted to financial institutions to improve their opportunities 'under the radar', so too are those who like to light fires, attracted to joining the fire services. As Fire Services across the world grapple with this issue, it must be recognised that it is not going to diminish on its own accord without deliberate and supported strategies to address the problem.

1. What are the recognized Wildfire Firefighter Arson Motives

Excitement

Fires set to satisfy an emotional need to create excitement. The subsets include:

Thrill seekers, Attention seekers and Recognition seekers. Specifically, the underlying issues of those displaying a hero / vanity motivations exist. It has been determined that, "Fire setting restores a feeling of power and control to an offender who has little of either in his or her life". Fire fighters arrested for arson generally fit a profile of thrill seekers. A common belief is that they set fires to be heroes; it is found that this motive is related to the excitement of getting away with the crime while surrounded by other fire fighters & investigators.

So what profile are these individuals likely to fit? One source of US research suggests that the typical Arsonist is..

- Young Caucasian male between 14 and 30
- Average to above-average intelligence
- Poor academic performance
- Comes from a broken home
- Often single or divorced
- Unemployed or employed as unskilled labourer.

Therefore in identifying the firefighter arsonist, it may be appropriate to review those suspected of fire lighting with this profile in mind. However, not all necessarily fit this category.

2. How does Australian research identify the Wildfire Firefighter Arsonist profile?

Recent research conducted by the Australian Criminal behavior analyst and consulting psychologist Rebekah Doley suggests, "You won't find it written anywhere, but in my experience the common theme among them is power. ...Many stay to watch or they monitor the fire's progress through the media."; "...They also tend to be serial offenders and, in my experience, most will not stop until caught." (*Wainwright, Robert. Look at what I've done: The Sydney Morning Herald. 7-8 January 2006, pp.13 & 16*).

This experience has been reflected in a number of Wildfire Firefighter arsonists convicted across a number of States in Australia. Based on similarities in traits, behaviors and attributes, the FBI (Douglas et al. 1992) and National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime (Sapp et al) have developed offender profiles for specific arson motives. No single offender is likely to display all of these characteristics, but it is likely that many of the attributes, traits and behaviors listed below will be present within bushfire arsonists lighting fires on the basis of these motives. (<http://www.aic.gov.au/topics/arson/aic.html>) Again this analysis can assist in identifying possible offenders within the fire service ranks who may be under suspicion of lighting wildfires.

USA FBI's Behaviour Analysis Unit

White male, age 17-25

One or both parents missing from home during childhood. If from intact home, the home atmosphere was mixed and unstable

Dysfunctional. One of the parents left the home before the child reached age 17. Cold, distant, hostile or aggressive relationship with natural father.

Poor marital adjustment. If not married, still living at home with parents.

Lack of stable interpersonal relationships.

Poor occupational adjustment. Menial labourer, skilled labourer, clerical jobs.

Interested in fire service in the context that it provides an arena for excitement, not for the sake of public service.

Alcoholism, childhood, hyperactivity, homosexuality, depression, borderline personality disorder, suicidal tendencies.

Mixed findings on intelligence, but most found to have average to higher intelligence. Poor academic performance.

3. What is the local experience? Some Australian examples.

An Australian Firefighter Arsonist #1

- Male
- 20 old
- He left school in Year 10, worked at McDonald's for four years and also had a job washing trucks which he said he lost for 'slacking off'.
- He had trouble fitting in, and after a series of break and

enters with a group of boys, he got a 12-month suspended sentence.

"His firesetting began in earnest when he saw footage of the New York City firefighters after the September 11 terrorist attacks. He began to crave the heroic recognition they received, and the praise bestowed on local fire service volunteers during the following summer.... He often reported the fires himself on his mobile phone, sometimes claiming to have spotted arsonists and chased them through the bush. XXXX had a record for housebreaking before his fire-setting spree. XXXX told police that he was excited by fire and that he got emotional satisfaction from the praise heaped on volunteer firefighters. (*Australian Institute of Criminology. Research and Public Policy Series No. 61*).

Once he was caught, fellow crew identified him as possibly linked to fire lighting due to his intimate knowledge of the fires attended. Convicted for 16 wildfire ignitions. Sometimes, he said, he lit fires just because he was bored. Fire gave him a feeling of accomplishment. He fully realised that the fires might kill people. A psychiatrist's report found that he had no mental illness. He was fully aware of what he was doing. He pleaded guilty to 16 charges of arson and was sentenced to two years' jail.

Indeed, the above case met closely many of the traits identified by research conducted in Australia and the US. In the above case, significant

information was provided by the offenders' colleagues in alerting authorities of a possible problem. This will be further addressed below.

An Australian Firefighter Arsonist #2

- Male
- 24 old
- Employment and personal problems
- Enthusiastic member of the Service.

In January 2001, lit a 'number' of fires. Limited intelligence came from fellow crew regarding his possible link to fire ignitions. However it took over a year before he was arrested for starting the fires he helped extinguish. When asked why, he claimed he had no explanation: "I have got a problem ... I did ... I lit the fire ... I don't know why. I just did.". [His] lawyers argued that he was suffering from severe depression because he was unemployed and was forced to live in a caravan park because he could not find suitable accommodation, and his relationship with his partner was under pressure. (*SYDNEY MORNING HERALD JAN 7 2006*).

In this instance too, the background profile of the individual linked to the typical profile in many instances identified by research in Australia and the US. In both examples, fires lit by these individuals were not lit to cause significant damage, nor did they. In fact, the fire behavior training and awareness provided through their Fire Service membership allowed them to undertake their deliberate fire lighting during specific conditions, preventing the

opportunity for major conflagrations to result. However, this is not always the case.

4. How big is the Firefighter Wildfire arson problem in Australia?

In comparing the larger rural based organisations, the number of Firefighters convicted for arson between 2001- 2008 are as follows..

- 13 of 70,000 members (NSW)
- 8 of 59,760 members (VICTORIA)
- 4 of 20,000 members (WESTERN AUSTRALIA)
- 1 of 15,000 members (SOUTH AUSTRALIA)

Whilst these figures are comparatively low, the overall effect on fire service morale and standing in the community is very high. Community confidence in their local fire service is dramatically eroded and has an overall effect on the Service as a whole. The effect is particularly evident in smaller communities where local links form the fabric of a town, and the effect of an arsonist being identified in the ranks can paralyse the ability of the remaining membership to confidently provide a fire response to their community.

Combine this with the cost to the Service in suppression along with the resulting damages to the community, and the problem of Firefighter Wildfire arson adds to significant cost to the communities affected. What does wildfire arson cost in Australia?

"The cost of the bushfires alone in 2002 is believed to be well in excess of \$100 million. However, the social cost of arson is thought to be four times the amount usually quoted if the cost of maintaining and developing infrastructure such as the police, fire brigades, courts and social services is considered. Arson results in higher insurance premiums, lost jobs when places of employment are destroyed, higher taxes and the loss of natural resources such as forests and bushland, and thus arguably affects all Australians." *ARSON -NSW PARLIAMENTARY BRIEFING PAPER 2,2003.*

5. How can the problem of Firefighter Wildfire arson be addressed by agencies?

To positively address the problem, Fire Agencies can institute the following strategies;

- i. Recruit selection process
- ii. Education / awareness programs for firefighters
- iii. Publicity
- iv. Dedicated Wildfire Investigation Team
- v. Enhanced Fire Investigator Training
- vi. Chief to Firefighter support for programs
- vii. Consistency of Fire Investigation processes
- viii. Fire Service/Interagency co-operation

i. Recruit selection process

Agencies can consider use of psychological assessment standard

to identify "at risk" applicants prior to selection. Whilst this is the case in larger salaried organizations, it may not be practical for some volunteer/smaller sized agencies. However background (criminal) checks to identify 'at risk' applicants should be mandatory. Interagency/Department information sharing (dismissed/convicted firefighters).

ii. Education / awareness programs for firefighters

Include in the recruit training program, a clear member awareness message on the issue. This should be addressed at the first opportunity during recruit training and reinforced during subsequent training opportunities in the firefighter's career.

iii. Publicity

A positive step agencies can adopt is promotion of the issue to the organization. The clear message that it will be investigated when suspected and that the community expects the highest standards within their fire service should form the foundation of the program.

Aspects include;

- Internal publicity program to promote deliberate fire lighting awareness.
- Clear reporting procedures should members become aware of a 'problem'.
- Adoption of Departmental policy to 'promote' convictions of firefighter arson cases. 'Zero tolerance'.

- Posters/ awareness campaigns/orders/newsletters (identifying firefighters charged, convictions etc).
- Externally via media, after firefighter charged to re-enforce zero tolerance policy of the fire service.

iv. Dedicated Wildfire Investigation Team

To accurately identify fires which are deemed to be deliberate, it is mandatory to have skilled staff to undertake this role. Inaccurate analysis of fire cause will provide a camouflage of the issue and will not trigger 'red flags' for the Fire Service to more closely examine fire lighting patterns to assist in identifying those responsible.

They must be;

- Adequately staffed.
- Adequately resourced.
- Delegated authority to undertake full investigative role.
- Ability to work 'unsupervised' and operate in confidence.
- Not linked to other roles within the Service (focused responsibility).
- Advanced level of investigative training.
- Formal links to other 'like' agency investigative bodies.

v. Enhanced Fire Investigator Training

Promote enhanced level of training to investigators to ensure patterns of fire lighting and trends are identified. Importantly, the management of

prosecutions must also be effectively implemented through enhanced training levels.

vi. Chief to Firefighter support for programs

If the support of the hierarchy to the fire fighter is not evident, the success of investigations will be all the more difficult to execute and maintain. A clear and demonstrated support of Firefighter Wildfire arson prevention programs must be evident to all in the Fire Service.

vii. Consistency of Fire Investigation processes

Clear doctrine for management of the investigation process needs to be adopted to ensure all investigations follow an accepted methodology. For instance, who do firefighters report their concerns to if they suspect a colleague is lighting bushfires? More importantly, can they be assured that the information they provide is not going to have repercussions for them down the track during investigations and during any subsequent prosecutions.

viii. Agency/Interagency Co-operation

Inevitably, investigations will cross boundaries of responsibility and jurisdiction. Agencies need to have in place agreements prior to any investigations coming under notice to identify 'who does what'.

6. Issues and hurdles faced by the Investigator

It needs to be acknowledged that the sensitivity of this problem has major repercussions on the effected Fire Service. The obvious political embarrassment caused to the Chief and their staff needs to be realized. Problems may be encountered where there may be an organisational desire to eliminate the problem 'subtly'. Station confusion/concern after recognising they have a 'problem' and how best to address it (reporting/allegiances/mateship) can also complicate any investigation in the fire station. The need (willingness) to keep the investigation confidential can also compromise a successful investigation, particularly in a small fire station where a close-knit community is represented. Finally, split responsibilities/issues between the Fire Service investigating their 'own' and the law enforcement agency can also see the investigator facing a more challenging investigation than otherwise may be the case.

To ensure these issues are minimized for the investigator as far as possible, it is appropriate for many of the points raised in (5) above are addressed.

7. What if the issue is ignored by the Fire Service?

To adopt a stance of ignoring the problem can expose the Fire Service to greater problems. For instance, increasing risk of deliberate fires; a real risk of death or injury along with increasing risk of deliberate fires resulting in property loss or during

the response of the Fire Service to the incident; an increased financial burden and inconvenience to the local community; reduced credibility of the Fire Service (community trust & support/government/recruiting issues).

Additionally, the legal liability of the Fire Service if suspecting the problem exists but not addressing it should damage/injury/death result from a firefighter arson event. This may see an external investigation body may be 'imposed' on the Fire Service to restore community confidence. Overall, the embarrassment to the Fire Service which may also see a reduction in support in the way of funding, morale, and in the case of volunteer agencies, a reliable membership base.

8. More research is needed..

Unfortunately not enough known about the problem of Wildland Firefighter Arson in Australia and overseas. Research to date is limited to a handful of convictions only. To gain a clearer understanding of the problem, and subsequent focused solutions to it, more research is needed. Finally, conclusions about the problem are based on the actions of convicted individuals only. However a concerted effort by the Fire Service can assist in reducing the threat and eliminating their actions.

**Richard Woods,
ACT Rural Fire Service**

The author wishes to acknowledge The Australian Criminal Behavior Analyst and Consulting Psychologist Ms Rebekah Doley; FBI profiler Timothy Huff; The Australian Institute of Criminology; Country Fire Service, South Australia; NSW Rural Fire Service; ACT Rural Fire Service; Country Fire Authority Victoria; Fire & Emergency Service Authority Western Australia; The Australian Institute of Criminology.

Richard Woods is the Operations Manager for the ACT Rural Fire Service in Canberra, having been recently appointed to the position. He has previously held the position of Manager Fire Investigation for the New South Wales (NSW) Rural Fire Service since 2001, his primary role being the establishment and management of Fire Investigation capability within that Service. Prior to this role he held the position of the Deputy Fire Control Officer for the Shoalhaven District on the South Coast of NSW, managing 32 Stations and 1200 fire-fighters. Whilst in this position Richard established Wildfire Investigation for that District, one of the first in NSW. Prior to coming to the New South Wales Rural Fire Service as an employee in 1991, Richard was a Volunteer with the Service since 1976 and a Police Officer in NSW for over 9 years.

Richard has also previously undertaken a number of study tours of North America reviewing Fire Investigation techniques across agencies and completed a Graduate Certificate and Diploma in Fire Investigation through Charles Sturt University in 2000 and 2005. In 2007 he completed a Graduate Certificate in Applied Management at the Australian Institute of Police Management.

Richard is the current Chair of the IAAI Wildland Arson Committee; Australian representative of the National Wildfire Co-ordinating Group Wildland Fire Investigation Team and is a former President of the NSW Chapter (47) of the International Association of Arson Investigators.

Richard can be contacted at richard.woods@act.gov.au

Victorian Association of Fire Investigators Inc.

Website www.vicfire.com

VAFI Scholarship

The 09/10 VAFI Scholarship has been awarded to Graham Davies from New Zealand and he will be using his scholarship to further his education and experience in Fire Investigation. We hope to have an article for Firepoint from him.

The VAFI Scholarship is a program where members can apply for a grant up to the value \$1,000 for education and training. Written applications prior to the 1 June each year are then considered by the committee and a selection made. Full details of the Scholarship are on the VAFI Website. Members should consider their options for the year 10/11.

Victoria Membership

Victoria Chapters continues to maintain its membership, but it is essential that all members renew their membership for 09/10. For those who have not paid reminders will be sent out after end August. Remember that yearly fees for the Chapter are due as of 1 July each year being \$55.00. Any member unsure of his/her membership status please contact Alex Conway Chapter Registrar at 03 94203883.

The Committee welcomes the following new members: Shelly Burnside (ESV), Bruce Embloton (CFA), David Detata and Melissa Davies from Chem centre WA (Forensics).

After much investigation and searching the committee is now moving to a web based membership database. This will give the management of our membership a great boost and allow easy access. The database will be managed through the VAFI Website. Details of the database will be advertised later.

TRAINING

TOUR - VICPOL FORENSICS SERVICES MACLEOD

The training session held at the Victoria Police Forensics Services Laboratory at MacLeod on 17th June 09. was well attended and after a presentation from George Xydias on dealing with exhibits for fire scenes, packaging samples and outlining the Laboratory's capabilities, the group was divided into four groups and toured the facility. Unfortunately due to the security aspects, the tour was restricted to certain areas. A great night had by those who attended and many thanks to the staff of the VPFSO for their efforts.

FUTURE TRAINING GAS & ELECTRICAL TRAINING SESSION

Unfortunately the magazine will be out after the Training session at CFA Huntly Training ground on Friday 28th August. Indications are that many members are taking the opportunity to attend and it should prove to be another excellent day of training. This is planned as a full day session with some training and live burns of cars to be included. Booking have been closed and a report will be in the next Firepoint.

VAFI CONFERENCE 26 OCTOBER 2009

Monday 26 October 2009 will be the VAFI One Day Conference and AGM to be held at the Veneto Club, Bulleen Road, Bulleen, just off the Eastern Freeway. The theme for the conference is "Current Trends and Update of Fire Investigation Techniques".

Guest Speakers include Paul Hollawood, Tony O'Connell, Debby Smith, Linden Blackly, Frank Stockton, Julie Harris and our interstate guest speaker will be Jim Munday. The day will include the Chapter AGM and include a Dinner and after Dinner Speaker. There will be trade displays and show bags. This is the major event for the Chapter and a great time to meet other members and network and also meet your Committee.

Costs for the Day are \$110.00 Members \$125 Non-Members, Day and Dinner are \$125.00 Members and \$145.00 Non Members. Booking are essential, refer to the VAFI Website or Flyer. Book early to ensure your place.

BEST LAWYER STORY???

A lawyer purchased a box of very rare and expensive cigars, then insured them against, among other things, fire. Within a month, having smoked his entire stockpile of these great cigars and without yet having made even his first premium payment on the policy the lawyer filed a claim against the insurance company.

In his claim, the lawyer stated the cigars were lost "in a series of small fires." The insurance company refused to pay, citing the obvious reason, that the man had consumed the cigars in the normal fashion. The lawyer sued and WON!

Delivering the ruling, the judge agreed with the insurance company that the claim was frivolous. The judge stated nevertheless, that the lawyer held a policy from the company, which it had warranted that the cigars were insurable and also guaranteed that it would insure them against fire, without defining what is considered to be unacceptable "fire" and was obligated to pay the claim. Rather than endure lengthy and costly appeal process, the insurance company accepted the ruling and paid \$15,000 to the lawyer for his loss of the cigars lost in the "fires".

After the lawyer cashed the check, the insurance company had him arrested on 24 counts of ARSON!!! With his own insurance claim and testimony from the previous case being used against him, the lawyer was convicted of intentionally burning his insured property and was sentenced to 24 months in jail and a \$24,000 fine.

This is allegedly a true story and was the First Place winner in the recent Criminal Lawyers Award Contest in the U.S.



**NSW ASSOCIATION OF FIRE
INVESTIGATORS INC**
(IAAI CHAPTER No.47)

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President's Report

Greg Kelly

Welcome everyone to another addition of "Firepoint". Firstly for those of you who have continued to support the Association throughout the last year, may I thank you for that support and trust that you will continue your involvement as the Association grows and continues to provide quality education and information in the fire investigation area.

For those that attended our Annual General Meeting. May I thank you for your attendance and participation in what was an excellent night. The numbers themselves were a little disappointing, however the night itself was a great success and I would like to thank Professor Peter Maitez, the Director of the Burns Unit at Concord Hospital for his attendance with his wife and providing a fantastic overview of the treatment of burns which was informative, enlightening and entertaining.

For those of you who weren't able to attend, can I encourage your future participation in evenings such as this. The Professor's presentation on his and his colleagues work in relation to the miraculous changes and advancements in burns treatment, can

substantially affect the lives of burns victims in a very positive manner and encourages us and the whole community to be of ongoing support to them and their studies.

I would like to thank the committee members and in particular our secretary Mark Black for his untiring work throughout the past year. Many of you would be aware that the executive of the Association have been re-elected for the coming 12 months which will be a very busy year.

I was disappointed in some ways to hear the Secretary's report at the Annual General Meeting that our membership has dropped in numbers over the last year and I believe it is incumbent on each of us to encourage others to join the association and that as members, we also provide feedback to the Association with regard to what types of education and topics we would like to see covered.

Many of us believe that the expansion of our education nights in the last year to Canberra was a success and we would like to thank those members and visitors that attended both of the presentations in the Canberra area and look forward to seeing them in the future. At the same time we can see that there could be an expansion of the education nights into other areas with us already mentioning the potential for similar nights to

be conducted along the New South Wales North Coast. The location which would hopefully be identified as being central to the majority of people in those regions has yet to be decided. We would welcome your feedback in relation to that consideration.

At the time of writing this report, we are about to have our first committee meeting since the Annual General Meeting. We also expect to have a presentation from a company who has provided an overview and quotation for the long awaited updating of our website. I can indicate to you that the company that we will be considering at this stage are professionals in their area and work full time in the area of website development.

After exchanging of ideas and information, it was decided that a Chairperson needed to be found in relation to the National Conference next year in order that the management of the project could be accommodated by one person who is able to delegate responsibilities of the various facets of the conference to the conference committee members. Our Senior Vice President Mark Pollard has volunteered to take on that role.

For those that may not be aware, Mark is an untiring support and although a member of the New South Wales Association, actually resides in Adelaide, South Australia. Not to embarrass him, but to encourage those of you who may sometimes contemplate travelling to education nights and meetings, Mark regularly travels to Sydney for committee meetings at his expense to be in attendance and provide worthwhile support for the overall benefits of members.

The coming 12 months is a period during which time I truly believe that we collectively need to encourage membership

and support the Association. I am personally of the belief that in these changing times with almost every letter of the alphabet seeming to represent a new generation, I find that too easily, we are able to compartmentalise people into a group without sometimes giving enough credit to individual performance. Something seems to underlie the Australian culture where we are a little reluctant to step up to the plate at times, maybe for fear of being brought down due to our tall poppy syndrome mentality which sometimes exists.

As I previously mentioned, each and everyone of us have a responsibility as members to support the Association and to encourage others to join and become part of a very dedicated group of people. May I particularly mention your committee and executive members both past and present who have continued to support the association and its development.

As a former police officer, I would like to see more involvement of the New South Wales Police and in particular Crime Scene Examiners. At the same time, we need to encourage members of the Insurance and Legal communities to again become active members of the Association.

I fear that without the active participation and support of each of us as individuals collectively working to expand the Association and its services that in time, numbers will diminish with the ultimate outcomes which follow that. The Association is in a sound financial position and readily open to consider further development which needs your support. I look forward to seeing you at the education evenings and for those that wish to attend our committee meetings. We look forward to a very successful year leading into the National Conference in 2010.

Queensland Chapter

The Queensland committee have been working diligently to ensure members obtain value for money and the association remains relevant to the needs of members, while maintain a financially viable association compliant with regulatory requirements. To this end, the committee have as a project to review the current constitution to ensure it is still relevant and workable. Any Queensland members who wish to put forward views on the current constitution, and or changes that may be considered necessary or beneficial, are asked to email the QAFI at QAFI@uttinglibke.com.au

The QAFI held a training session revisiting “Operation BrightSpark” on 16 July 2009. It was a well attended event with 33 people enjoying breakfast at the Kedron Wavell Services Club and a viewing of the DVD of the QAFI Operation BrightSpark conference of some years ago. The DVD highlighted some electrical ignition sources of fire, as well as fire spread in a typical house fire situation. It also showed the benefits of sprinkler systems and gave the longer serving members the opportunity to play spot the younger version of “so-and-so”.

The gathering then were given a short presentation from Brian Richardson on the current state of play in electrical safety progress to prevent fires as well as view some recent case examples of electrical equipment that caused fires (or didn’t as the spontaneous combustion of clothes in a clothes dryer case showed). Members and guests at the breakfast also took the opportunity to discuss some of the issues of electrical equipment safety and legislative requirements in place to help prevent fires or

remove from the marketplace equipment that may cause fires.

UPCOMING EVENTS

10 SEPTEMBER 2009 – Arson, Fraud, Legal Actions and Burdon of Proof

Sponsors – Bay Building Services and Insight Restorations

The QAFI will hold a one day conference focusing on legal aspects of fire investigation. Issues such a arson and fraud, burden of proof and rules of evidence will be presented, along with case studies to highlight the legal process involved with fire investigations. The day long event will be held at the Emergency Services complex in Kedron and is again sponsored by Insight Restorations and Bay Building Services. The QAFI appreciates the support of the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service and the sponsor companies that assist in enabling these type of days to go ahead.

Topics will include the standard of proof and onus of proof in a criminal case and in a civil case, human behaviour with fraud as well as evidence gathering and witness interview techniques. Case studies of different government agency prosecutions and civil actions will be discussed and a video of a court room scenario will be shown.

Details are given in the following three pages.

Arson, Fraud, Legal Actions Burden Of Proof

Department of Emergency Services Auditorium
Gympie Road, Kedron, Brisbane

10 September 2009

The QAFI is proud to host a one day seminar in Brisbane on Thursday, the 10th September 2009 addressing Arson, Fraud, Legal actions and Burden of Proof.

This seminar will highlight the legal activities that are associated with fire investigation. Requirements for prosecution by government regulatory agencies against arsonists or other responsible persons, or for civil litigation to recover loss and damages will be discussed and highlighted by case studies. Human behaviour and interview techniques, along with a QAFI video of a courtroom re-enactment will also be presented.

This seminar will benefit all those involved in fire investigation and the subsequent activities that occur from these investigations. Police, Fire Service, Electrical Examiners, Gas Examiners, EPA, Local Government, Loss Adjusters, Factual Investigators, Insurance Claims personnel and Insurance Lawyers are a few of the industry categories that would find benefit in attending this seminar.

Seminar PROGRAM

Thursday 10 September 2009 – QFRS Auditorium, Kedron Park,
Brisbane

- 0815 *Registration – QFRS Emergency Services Complex , Park Road, Kedron*
- 0845 *Welcome by **Brian Richardson**, President of the QAFI*
- 0855 *Official Opening –**Mark Roache**, QFRS Assistant Commissioner*
- 0910 *Session 1 – **Onus of proof including criminal/civil actions**
Quentin Lanyon-Owen*
- 1000 *Session 2 – **Rules of evidence/ Evidence gathering** Qld Police Service- Scientific section*
- 1030 *Morning Tea*
- 1050 *Session 3 – **Human behaviour with fraud** **Wayne Peterich – Bond University***
- 1125 *Session 4 – **Case study – Arson/fraud** **Maurie Tong***
- 1200 *Lunch*
- 1305 *Session 5 – **Interview techniques** **Ian Mercier** **Ian Mercier- Arson Squad***
- 1335 *Session 6 – **Case Study-Insurance Industry Arson** **Gary Nash/Ross Morson***
- 1410 *Session 7 – **Case study – Prosecution under QFRS Act**
–Ganzer – Sandgate arson QFRS*
- 1445 *Afternoon Tea*
- 1510 *Session 10 – **Case Study – Prosecution under the Electrical Safety Act 2002**
- downlight fire **Qld Electrical Safety Office***
- 1540 *Session 11 – **The witness video- coronial inquest** **Brian Richardson***
- 1610 *Close*

Cost to Attend

	MEMBERS	NON-MEMBERS
Individual	\$195-00*	\$245-00*
Group (5 or more)	\$160-00*	\$180-00*

*Note – including GST

Members include – QAFI, AFI NSW, VIC AFI, FIANZ, IAAI

2009 IAAI Annual Training Conference

Arlington, Texas, USA

I was fortunate enough to be invited to make a presentation at the 2009 Annual Training Conference (ATC), held in Arlington, Texas during May 2009. The conference was attended by approx. 380 investigators from around the world, USA, Australia, New Zealand, Sweden, Dubai, UK, Israel, etc.

The conference was held in the Arlington Convention Centre, attached to the Arlington Sheraton Hotel, between Dallas and Fort Worth, Texas. This was the 20th ATC conducted by the IAAI.

The week started on Sunday night with the President's Reception, where old friends meet to catch up and new friendships are made. One of the most valuable things that come from conferences such as this are the friendships, and contacts made; and the networking that provides valuable contacts for the future.

Monday started with the official opening ceremonies, prior to classes beginning. The conference room was hung with the flags of all chapter states and countries and the ceremony is quite a moving affair, especially the commemoration and remembrance of fallen comrades from the past twelve months.

Classes offered on the first day included Fire Dynamics, Documentation at fire scenes, Post Flashover pattern recognition, and an interesting session involving a talk by a convicted arsonist. Speakers such as John DeHaan, Dan Madrzykowski (NIST) and James Allan presented throughout the day.

A session was to be conducted throughout the week for beginners in fire investigation where the basics of fire investigation were covered.

During the lunch hour a meeting was convened for invited Chapter presidents or their delegates. I was lucky enough to be representing the Presidents of the NSW and Victoria Chapters. Matters of concern and current items were discussed and the (then) President Ken Finley (Texas) presented a rundown of matters of concern to the IAAI over the past twelve months and what was happening in the future.

One matter of great concern was the fact that the current database and website (www.firearson.com) was presenting problems and was being looked at to provide solutions to the problems that had been identified. A presentation was made detailing the content of the Chapter President's Handbook (available on the website)

which contains a great deal of information to assist Chapters with their smooth running. This document also contains forms required by the chapter officers.

Tuesday saw speakers such as Peter Beering, Jamie Novak, and David Ilove presenting on topics such as Electrical heat generation, Wind-driven fires, Terrorism and Management Skills. One of the highlights of the week was the presentation by Jamie Novak (Minnesota) showing how electricity can start fires, how it is misrepresented as a fire cause and to finish, place an energized light globe, power point and a whole switchboard into a container of water without any sparks or expected electrical problems arising.

The afternoon was held aside for the AGM of the IAAI, attended by a majority of attendees; although some classes were offered for those who weren't interested in attending. It was reported that the IAAI has now an international membership of 7777 worldwide, involving 71 Chapters. It was reported that the newest Chapter (the Charter being presented at the meeting) was formed in, and represented, Italy.

The meeting was provided with information on the financial assets of the organization and informed of a new programme being instituted to assist with qualifications of fire investigators. This new programme will be the Fire Investigation Technicians Programme and will be a stepping stone to the current Certified

Fire Investigator (CFI) programme; with people not being part, or full-time investigators, able to qualify for the new designation and start their career with a view to obtaining the CFI qualification. This new programme will be offered very soon and members should seek information on the website in the near future.

The awards committee detailed the awards for 2008/09, with yours truly being awarded a Twenty Year pin (for twenty years continuous service with the IAAI). Other awards were presented for Photography, 20 – 25 & 30 year member pins, Outstanding Chapter (Kansas), Best Chapter publication (California). After this the results of the 2009 election were announced – 2nd Vice President (Rodney Pevytoe) and Directors – George Coddington, George Wendt, Roger Krupp, Ed Rostalski (Alberta, Canada) and Bill Dickinson [Congratulations to all]. Nominations were called for the 2010 elections positions. The new President is Robert Schaal.

During the meeting I made an announcement to inform all attending in regard to the conferences being held in Australia in 2010 – the ANZ International Forensic Science Symposium (September – website – www.anzfss2010.com.au) and the proposed (Combined Australian/NZ Chapters) South Pacific Conference (further information to follow). This announcement raised a lot of interest from attendees and I'm sure we can look forward to international members attending for both conferences.

Wednesday's sessions included Prosecution, Interview and interrogation, Fire Death Investigation, Collection of Electrical Evidence, Fire Protection Systems and many more interesting topics, delivered by world renowned speakers.

On Thursday sessions included Bombing Investigation (Israel – case studies), Explosion Investigation (yours truly), Firefighter Arson (Ex-NSW Chapter President Richard Woods), the Buncefield Oil fire (England) and Profiling an Arsonist. *[The last class was held in the room next door to the Explosion Investigation classroom and it was said that during the explosions that were shown the speaker had to be quiet because no-one could hear her over the explosions.]*

During the week attendees were offered the opportunity to attend local laboratories (BATFE) and observe current laboratory methods and presentations. A Fire Modelling workshop was also on offer. Local Police, Fire Marshals and Sheriff's Officers were attending and offered local visits to observe current methods first hand.

Friday was a short day with classes held during the morning, including Crime Scene Mapping, and Spontaneous Combustion.

For the first time no examination was offered at the ATC this year. What usually happens is that they hold a sit-down examination to test students on

what has been presented during the week; as a result they can get a certificate of attendance, or attainment, depending on how successful they are in the exam.

This time, that didn't happen, but instead they gave out pin numbers so that students can access www.cfitrainer.net and do the exam online with the pin number access; that way you have to answer a small questionnaire re the ATC before you can get your certificate.

Overall, the week was very interesting and educational, with a large amount of information offered and opportunities to meet and interact with world renowned experts in the field of fire investigation.

Ross Brogan AFSM, MA, CFI

(Editor: *Congratulations, Ross, on your twenty year Award*).

