

## Tuross Head Rural Fire Brigade



After a period of relative calm, the Brigade experienced two call-outs recently which highlighted the need for all residents to maintain a state of alertness to the potential for disaster.

In the first instance, the Brigade was sent to a local grass-fire. When they arrived at the fire-ground there appeared to be no-one in attendance. With the forecast predicting increasing winds later in the day, even a small fire could rapidly turn into an inferno. Regrettably neither the Fire Control Centre (FCC) nor any neighbours had been forewarned about the fire, so it was only a matter of time before a concerned caller sounded the alarm. Fortunately this fire required minimum activity by the Brigade, but it generated a fair degree of frustration that the call-out was needed in the first place. Remember

that when their beepers go off, volunteers from the Brigade stop what they are doing and immediately head up to the Fire Depot to be rapidly deployed – often without knowing the severity of the incident until they get there. Alongside possible loss of wages (or perhaps some valuable leisure time), accidents have been known to occur during this frenetic activity.

So before you consider lighting a fire in the open, at any time of the year, take note of the NSW Rural Fire Service's pamphlet "*Before You Light That Fire*", and make sure you have:

1. Gained environmental approval (if required – check with the FCC)
2. Been issued a Fire Permit (if required -see below)
3. **Notified all adjoining landowners/occupiers and your local fire authority**
4. Notified your local Council (if required)
5. Checked for Total Fire Ban or No Burn Days

The next day ... another call-out ... again thanks to a vigilant neighbour. This time in response to an activated smoke alarm. Naturally the Brigade always has to assume that there is a fire and that there may be one or more persons at risk. Fortunately this time, the house appeared unoccupied and there were no external signs of fire. A minor dilemma arose since nobody was home - the Brigade was unable to undertake a more thorough internal check nor turn off the alarm. Anxious eyes checked off and on for signs of fire for the rest of the day!

Two call-outs on consecutive days - either of which could have been serious – perhaps next time it will be - **semper vigilo!**

Please note that **FIRE PERMITS ARE NOW REQUIRED** (from 1<sup>st</sup> September) as the Bush Fire Danger Period has been brought forward this year.

Come on up sometime and talk to other volunteers about becoming a part of this worthwhile community activity. Members of the Tuross Head Rural Fire Brigade will give you a warm welcome at our Drake Street Depot, on any Wednesday evening from 5:30 to 7:30 and from 9am to noon on the first Saturday morning of each month.

**PREPARE . ACT . SURVIVE .**

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