

media release



CFS hosts international fire fighters

Sunday, 25 January 2009

The Chief Officer of the Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) Grant Lupton and the Chief Officer of the Country Fire Service (CFS) Euan Ferguson have welcomed two international fire fighters from Greece who arrived in Adelaide today as part an Australian rural fire service educational visit.

Major Ioannis Kapakis and Major Christos Lambris from the Hellenic Fire Service will spend the next five days familiarising themselves with CFS operational and community education imperatives.

Their visit follows an Australian senior fire fighting delegation to Greece in 2007 which included the CFS Deputy Chief Officer Andrew Lawson and MFS District Officer George Rodis.

The delegation was invited to Greece by the Hellenic Fire Service several weeks after the country's worst fire season with 76 deaths and numerous injuries.

"This is an acknowledgement and recognition by the Hellenic Fire Service of the quality of service our CFS volunteers and staff provide to protect their communities," Mr Ferguson said.

"We look forward to sharing our knowledge and experiences, including how we manage bushfires, support our volunteers and engage with the community," he said.

"This visit also reflects the strong ties between the CFS and international fire fighting agencies."

The Hellenic Fire Service fire fighters will spend seven days in Adelaide which will also include a tour of the MFS Headquarters in Wakefield Street.

The MFS Chief Officer Grant Lupton said: "South Australians were also impacted by the fatal fires in Greece in 2007, given the state's large Greek community and the fact our fire services have faced similar challenges.

"The strong bond between South Australia's fire services and the Hellenic Fire Service was forged through this tragic event and continues to be mutually beneficial from a learning perspective," Mr Lupton said.

The Hellenic Fire Service fire fighters have also been hosted by the New South Wales Rural Fire Service and the Tasmania Fire Service and will spend several days with the Country Fire Authority in Victoria next week.