

media release

SA Metropolitan Fire Service



Recruits, defence medallists honoured at graduation

Thursday 30 October 2008

The SA Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) numbers and credentials will be bolstered on Friday, with 18 new recruits joining the front line firefighting ranks and two firefighters receiving medals for overseas service with the Australian Defence Force Reserves.

Emergency Services Minister Michael Wright will join Chief Officer Grant Lupton at the MFS Headquarters ceremony to congratulate the newest graduates, and Colonel Craig McCarthy from the Australian Defence Force Reserves will present the service medals.

Mr Lupton says the backgrounds of the new recruits are as diverse as the communities they will serve.

“The 18 new firefighters have worked in a variety of occupations including law enforcement (customs, corrections and police), forensic science, teaching, carpentry, and IT.

“And a number of the graduates have migrated from Alaska, the UK and New South Wales to join our fire service.

“It’s pleasing that MFS continues to attract such highly-skilled and dedicated recruits.”

Mr Lupton says that while a career as a firefighter nowadays is much broader than in days gone by, a good level of fitness is still paramount.

“Although being a firefighter these days is far more diverse than just rescuing someone from a burning building, physical strength and fitness remain hallmarks of a successful firefighter.

“Amongst this graduating class is a Surf Life Saver, a former member of the US Marine Corps, a West Adelaide footballer and a world champion triathlete,” says Mr Lupton.

Last month 18 recruits completed the 14-week course, and with Friday’s graduation, the number of serving officers in the greater metropolitan area will be 822.

The ceremony will also feature the presentation of three defence service medals. Station Officer Peter Reynolds will be awarded the Australian Active Service medal and the Iraq Campaign medal for his six-month stint in Iraq and Afghanistan as an operations analyst. Firefighter Anthony Portakiewicz will receive the Australian Service medal for his efforts in a peacekeeping mission in the Solomon Islands.

Mr Lupton says “Firefighters have a very diverse role to play in their jobs from emergency management response to communications to community education and a career in the fire service not only provides opportunities for skill development, specialisation and career progression, but also provides opportunities for helping the community, both here and abroad.”

MEDIA NOTE: Media welcome to attend ceremony on FRIDAY 31 October at 11 am at MFS Headquarters, 99 Wakefield Street, Adelaide