

media release



Increased protection for SA firefighters with new firefighting helmets

Monday, 17 April 2023

The safety of South Australia's firefighters is being enhanced with the roll-out of new helmets for South Australian Country Fire Service (CFS) and Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) firefighters.

CFS firefighters will receive brand new structural firefighting helmets to complement their existing multipurpose (wildland and rescue) firefighting helmets. Meanwhile, MFS firefighters will receive two brand new helmets; one structural and the other, multipurpose (wildland and rescue), replacing the single structure fire helmet MFS firefighters historically used.

The announcement follows a tender review process and a rigorous trial by female and male firefighters across both fire agencies.

The initiative will align helmet use for CFS and MFS firefighters, who'll be able to tailor their helmet selection to structural or wildlands (bushfire and rescue) – depending on the type of emergency they're responding to.

Paid and volunteer firefighters will be provided with the Rosenbauer HEROS-titan AS helmet – one of the lightest structural helmets available on the market – progressively from next week.

Importantly, these helmets are ergonomically designed with an optimised centre of gravity for better neck stability; have an inner harness that can be easily removed for laundering; and can be adjusted for size from the outside whilst wearing gloves.

South Australia's fire agencies strive to provide the greatest level of protection and highest quality equipment for its firefighters, while also evolving with advancements in technology.

The structural firefighting helmets, which are now being used in 140 countries, also underwent a trial by six CFS and six MFS firefighters to ensure they would be fit for purpose.

During the trial, firefighters wore the helmet for several drills including climbing through vehicles and using Road Crash Rescue (RCR) tools to simulate RCR responses, crawling through smoke filled tunnels and buildings conducting searches, dressing and wearing HazMat suits, and general firefighter skill drills.

Throughout the two days, the participants were asked to evaluate the helmets across a broad range of criteria including its fit for purpose and functionality, flexibility and ergonomics, comfort and sizing.

Where possible, the CFS is donating Pacific F3D helmets to partner agencies. This includes our Pacific neighbour, the Republic of Kiribati, where CFS has participated in a mentoring program to upskill the resources and develop a highly coordinated emergency service for the remote community of 120,000.

Quotes attributable to Joe Szakacs

Ensuring our career and volunteer firefighters receive the best safety equipment possible is vital.

I'm thankful to both the MFS and CFS for committing to an in-depth process to ensure their staff and volunteers are as safe as possible when they put their lives on the line for their communities.

Collaboration in planning and responding to emergencies happens every day, and this first and important collaboration in procurement is a significant step forward in South Australia.

The State Government is proud to be offering world-class helmets for our front-line hero firefighters.

**For media enquiries telephone the
MFS Media Line (08) 8204 3770 or the CFS Media Line on (08) 8115 3531**

Or visit www.cfs.sa.gov.au and www.mfs.sa.gov.au

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Quotes attributable to CFS Chief Officer Brett Loughlin AFSM

The safety of our men and women is our number one priority and not only are these helmets some of the most advanced in the market, but they have also been tried, tested and selected by South Australia's firefighters.

Firefighting is inherently a dangerous profession, with a multitude of hazards and risks when responding.

One of the less obvious risks is the longer-term threat from carcinogens present in the smoke and debris at an incident, therefore, by selecting helmets which have inner harnesses that are easily removable, it allows a firefighter to easily launder all of their PPE/C.

Quotes attributable to MFS Chief Officer Michael Morgan AFSM

Now, firefighters from both firefighting agencies will be able to choose a helmet that's most suited to the emergency they are responding to, meaning a more tailored and safer environment for our firefighters to operate in.

The MFS has been using the same structural firefighting helmet for about 20 years and they've served their purpose well for all incidents. But, with recent advances in technology, we'll now see South Australia's firefighters at the forefront, using modern, cutting-edge structural firefighting helmets in their emergency response duties.

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