

media release

SA Metropolitan Fire Service



Diversity push boosts female firefighter numbers

Friday, 10 May 2019

For the first time, the number of full-time female Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) firefighters across Metropolitan Adelaide will hit 20, when the state's newest firefighters graduate today.

The organisation has seen a 35 % increase in female firefighters within its ranks since former Chief Officer Greg Crossman announced a push for greater diversity in December 2015.

Three of today's 24 graduating recruit firefighters are female, hailing from varied backgrounds including a black hawk helicopter pilot, mining professional and teacher.

MFS Chief Officer, Michael Morgan said he is buoyed by the increase in females and people with culturally diverse backgrounds applying to become – and becoming - firefighters.

“Until 2016, on average, about 4.5 % of our applicants were females, meaning it was rare for a female applicant to make a recruit squad. Since then, applications from women have nearly tripled, and that's translating to greater diversity in our workforce.

“Since 2016, the MFS has seen seven females graduate as MFS firefighters, representing a 35 % increase in our number of full time female firefighters in the past three years. It's positive progress that we're determined to continue building upon,” MFS Chief Officer Morgan said.

The MFS said the increase in diversity is a positive sign that an historical community stereotype of firefighters only being men – is starting to fall away.

Today's 24 recruits hail from farming, teaching, the Australian Defence Force, construction, social work, refrigeration mechanic, motor mechanic, mining, electrician, youth work, plumbing and gas-fitting, outdoor education, IT, flooring and tourism.

Over the past 16 weeks, they've attended in excess of 100 lectures and completed more than 700 hours of challenging physical training.

Every recruit firefighter has the opportunity to pursue a different career path, including firefighting operations, community education, engineering, built environs, training, fire cause investigation, triple zero communications, management, Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) and Hazmat.

The MFS anticipates that firefighter applications will open again in the last half of this year.

MFS Chief Officer Morgan said, “We're looking for men and women who are committed to teamwork, physical fitness, community safety, education and prevention.

“Firefighters undertake physically and mentally demanding work and are trained to respond to a broad range of incidents. If you're fit, healthy and community minded, then it might be a role for you.”

The MFS joins fire services across Australia and the western world in actively seeking greater diversity, to ensure its workforce reflects the diversity in the community it serves.

For media enquiries please telephone the MFS Media Line on (08) 8204 3770

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