

media release



Firefighter siblings achieve century of service

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Two South Australian brothers are hanging up their helmets after collectively achieving 100 years of firefighting service between the state's fire agencies.

Paringa Country Fire Service (CFS) firefighter Alan Eckermann joined the CFS in 1962 and has clocked up 57 years of volunteer service.

His brother, Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) Riverland Commander Kevin Eckermann joined the MFS in July 1975 and is retiring this month after 44 years of service.

Emergency Services Minister, Corey Wingard said the brothers' achievement is remarkable.

"These two brothers have provided remarkable service to the community over such a long period.

"I congratulate, and thank them, on behalf of all South Australians and will ensure the legacy of their work is not forgotten by making sure the Marshall Government continues its focus on supporting our emergency services."

Alan (CFS) and Kevin (MFS) are two of twelve siblings from the Eckermann family, spending their childhood at Paringa in the Riverland, where Alan still resides.

MFS Acting Chief Officer, Paul Fletcher said Kevin is a highly regarded member of the MFS.

"Kevin started his career as a retained MFS firefighter in the Riverland in 1975 before becoming a full-time MFS firefighter in Adelaide in 1976. He spent most of his career in Adelaide, rising to the rank of Commander before taking up the role of MFS Riverland Commander in 2013.

"Kevin is a hard-working and much loved member of the MFS who has a great passion for serving his community. We will greatly miss his service, and congratulate him and his brother Alan on their century of firefighting in South Australia," MFS Acting Chief Officer Fletcher said.

CFS Acting Chief Officer, Andrew Stark said CFS has many families involved in the service and it's wonderful to celebrate Alan and Kevin's achievements.

"Alan's commitment to his local community has seen him spend more than half a century protecting it. Since he stopped riding the fire truck in 2016 he's been in the radio room, and is now passing on his skills and knowledge to the next generation.

MFS Riverland Commander Kevin Eckermann said he has always had a passion for serving the community.

"That's what led me to join the MFS 44 years ago, and I've loved every minute of my career since. While I'll miss my colleagues and the uniform, my wife Rhonda and I look forward to enjoying our retirement together," retiring MFS Commander Kevin Eckermann said.

CFS Operational Support Officer Alan Eckermann said living on a farm he was always concerned about fire and joined CFS after a local saw mill burned down.

"Dad always said to me, help the community because you never know when the community will help you – that stuck with me all my life."

"It's something that you get a real passion for. I'm going to miss it – retiring is one of the hardest things I've had to decide."

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