

media release

SA Metropolitan Fire Service



Leadership Under Fire for Operation Flinders Young Mentors

Friday, 20 September 2019

Young people who have completed the Operation Flinders program will have an unforgettable life experience this weekend, honing their leadership skills with the Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS).

The ***Leadership Under Fire*** weekend at the MFS in Adelaide is a biennial initiative designed to give Operation Flinders Peer Group Mentors (PGM) a taste of what it takes to become a firefighter.

PGMs will spend three days with MFS firefighters, undertaking physical challenges and attending career seminars held by the MFS, South Australia Police and SA Ambulance Service (SAAS). They will also participate in the MFS Road Awareness Program (RAP).

Minister for Emergency Services, Corey Wingard said Operation Flinders has a long history in transforming the lives of young South Australians at risk.

“As Emergency Services Minister, I’m incredibly proud that this great program partners with the MFS, SAPOL and SAAS to help those young people foster leadership skills, overcome physical challenges and build their confidence, providing them with a unique insight into what our dedicated Emergency Services do every day.”

Acting MFS Chief Officer, Paul Fletcher said MFS firefighters have had a long association with Operation Flinders.

“A number of our firefighters have helped to run Operation Flinders wilderness exercises in the northern Flinders Ranges over its 28 year history. This has led to the development of the *Leadership Under Fire* experience for Operation Flinders graduates.

“The young people who’ll spend the weekend with the MFS have demonstrated leadership qualities, including empathy, personal growth and a willingness to help others. They’ll have a memorable experience with firefighters and can apply learnings to their PGM role and personal lives,” Acting MFS Chief Officer Paul Fletcher said.

Media are welcome to attend Adelaide Fire Station from 10 am until 12 noon on Saturday, 21 September when Operation Flinders PGMs will undertake a number of physical challenges. These include abseiling from the fire tower, crawling through tunnels, ascending ten stories high in an aerial fire truck and learning to use firefighting hose.

Operation Flinders CEO, John van Ruth said the weekend is designed to foster the leadership potential of a special group of young people.

“Spending the weekend with firefighters will provide these young people with a chance to have quality time with positive role models while learning about a potential career in emergency services.

“The experience, confidence and learnings they take from this weekend will stay with them forever. This is a unique life event that could help guide their future career choices,” CEO, John van Ruth said.

MFS Commander Michael Shepherd is an Operation Flinders Team Leader who was instrumental in making *Leadership Under Fire* possible.

“The young people spending the weekend with us at the MFS will be able to explore their potential and overcome physical challenges. It’s all about building their confidence and leadership skills.

“Our firefighters will have immense satisfaction knowing that they’re helping young people at risk to have a positive life experience that could shape their future,” MFS Commander Mick Shepherd said.

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

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