



South Australian
**State
Emergency
Service**

Working for the SES



Government
of South Australia

Message from the SES Chief Officer Chris Beattie

Thank you for your interest in the South Australian State Emergency Services (SES). As Chief Officer, I am pleased you've chosen to explore this information booklet as your first step towards understanding the vital role the SES plays in safeguarding our communities across the state.

Within these pages, you'll find valuable insights into our emergency management arrangements, the responsibilities we share, and the rewarding opportunities that await those who choose to serve.

I encourage you to consider how your skills and passion could contribute to our dedicated team, helping South Australians in times of need. We look forward to possibly welcoming you to our SES team and supporting your journey in emergency management and community resilience.



Our Vision

A reliable and trusted volunteer-based organisation building safe and resilient communities.

Our Mission

To minimise the loss of life, injuries and damage from emergencies and natural disasters.

Our Values

We share the values of the Public Sector and these guide us in our work. **These are:**



Service

We proudly serve the community and the South Australian Government



Trust

We have the confidence in the ability of others



Collaboration and Engagement

We create solutions together



Courage and tenacity

We never give up



Professionalism

We strive for excellence



Respect

We value every individual



Honesty and Integrity

We act truthfully, consistently, and fairly

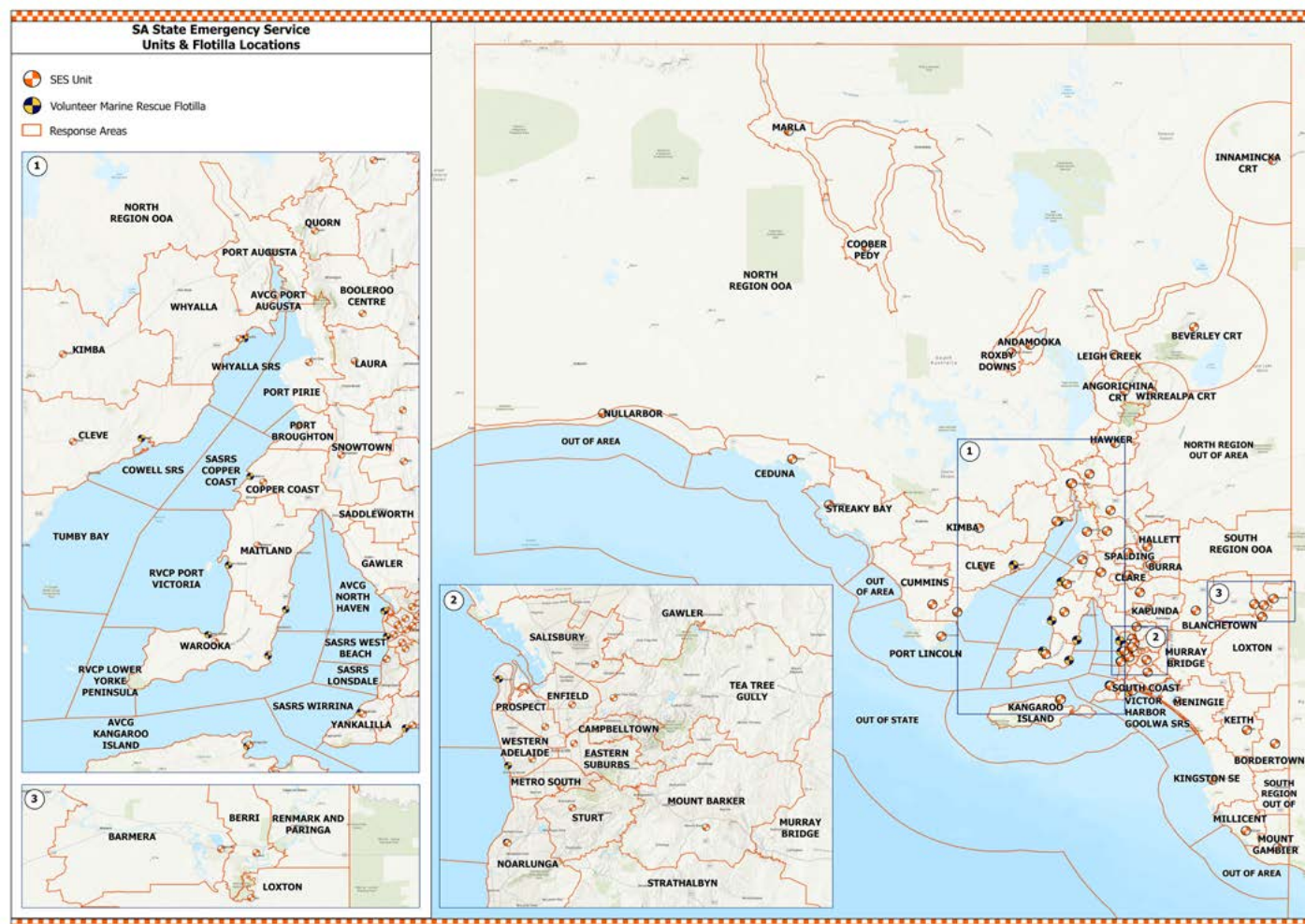


Sustainability

We work to get the best results for current and future generations of South Australians

Resources

[Code of Ethics](#) | [Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment](#)



Our Volunteers

SES volunteers are the backbone of the organisation, providing emergency response capability through a network of 70 units across South Australia.

These dedicated individuals respond to a wide range of emergencies, including:

- Extreme weather events – floods, storms and heatwaves
- Road crashes
- Marine, swift water, vertical and confined space rescues

Their work extends beyond immediate response, as they also play a crucial role in community education and preparedness, helping residents understand risks and build resilience against disasters.

Their training equips them to handle complex and often hazardous situations, ensuring the safety of both those affected and their fellow responders. Volunteers are also adept at supporting other emergency services agencies, contributing to coordinated efforts during large-scale incidents and natural disasters.

Our volunteers are the primary stakeholder of our paid staff. The role of our staff is to support and enable our volunteers to undertake the critical work they do for the South Australian community. This support is provided through onboarding, education and training, assets and equipment, ICT systems and support, administrative and financial assistance and public information and engagement.

[Click here to watch a short video about our volunteer recruitment.](#)

Our Future

Keeping our volunteers, our staff and our communities safe.

We set goals and objectives to address our communities' diverse challenges, give direction to our organisation, unite volunteers, and guide our efforts toward positive impact.

The theme of our Strategic Directions 2026-2031 is building a more ready, capable and sustainable emergency service.

OUR FOCUS OVER THE NEXT 5 YEARS



OUR COMMUNITIES

Connected, prepared and safer

Risk informed

Understanding our hazards, exposures and vulnerabilities to inform preparedness efforts

Community centred

Tailoring engagement and awareness programs to the needs of our communities

Partnership driven

Working closely with stakeholders and partner agencies to improve our plans and responses



OUR CAPABILITIES

Fit-for-purpose and future-ready

Readiness focused

Defining and measuring readiness across the people, training, systems and equipment behind every capability

Risk aligned

Matching our capabilities to the risks and emergencies we are most likely to face

Always improving

Learning from operations, exercises and reviews to strengthen how we perform



OUR VOLUNTEERS

Supported, skilled and valued

Well led and supported

Growing leaders at every level and looking after the wellbeing, safety and inclusion of every volunteer

Trained and engaged

Building volunteer skills and broadening opportunities to participate

Diverse and sustainable

Attracting and retaining a committed volunteer base that reflects the communities we serve



OUR AGENCY

Effective, efficient and accountable

Well governed

Streamlining processes and strengthening the governance, policies and systems we rely on

Data led

Using data and insight to guide our decisions and measure how we perform

People focused

Strengthening the skills, wellbeing and workplace culture that make SES somewhere our staff want to work and stay



WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE IN 2031



Clearer priorities and direction



Better alignment to real risks



Stronger support and capability



A more sustainable, future-ready SES



Our Legislation

The SES is a volunteer-based organisation established by the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005* as an agency of the Crown for the handling of certain emergency situations; and for other purposes.

The SES exists to provide an emergency response capability that enhances community safety, minimises loss of life, injuries and damage from emergencies and natural disasters. The SES' functions are to:

- assist the Commissioner of Police in dealing with any emergency;
- assist the State Co-ordinator, in accordance with the State Emergency Management Plan, in carrying out prevention, preparedness, response or recovery operations under the *Emergency Management Act 2004*;
- assist the Chief Executive within the meaning of the *South Australian Public Health Act 2011*, in accordance with the Public Health Emergency Management Plan, in carrying out prevention, preparedness, response or recovery operations under Part 11 of that Act;
- to assist the SA Metropolitan Fire Service and SA Country Fire Service in dealing with any emergency;
- to deal with any emergency:
 - o (i) where the emergency is caused by flood or storm damage; or
 - o (ii) where there is no other body or person with lawful authority to assume control of operations for dealing with the emergency.
- to deal with any emergency until such time as any other body or person that has lawful authority to assume control of operations for dealing with the emergency;
- to respond to emergency calls and, where appropriate, provide assistance in any situation of need whether or not the situation constitutes an emergency;
- to undertake rescues; and
- to perform any other function assigned to the SES by the *Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005* or any other Act.

Resources

[Link to Fire and Emergency Services Act 2005](#)

[Link to Emergency Management Act 2004](#)

South Australia's Emergency Management Arrangements

The focus of South Australia's emergency management arrangements is to:

- preserve life;
- reduce risk from identified hazards which impact communities, business (including primary production), the environment, property and infrastructure;
- coordinate response to and manage emergencies;
- support recovery of individuals, communities, business (including primary production), the environment, property and infrastructure following an emergency; and
- continually improve the arrangements based on learnings from responding to, managing and assisting with recovery from an emergency.

The State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP) is a series of documents that ensures the state has effective arrangements in place to enhance the safety and security of the South Australian community.

The SEMP recognises the state's emergency management arrangements use the 'all-hazards approach' which assumes the functions and activities applicable to one hazard are often applicable to a range of hazards.

Importantly, the SEMP assigns key roles and responsibilities to government agencies relative to the hazards. The SES has been assigned as the Hazard Risk Reduction Leader for Extreme Weather (including heat) and the Control Agency for both Extreme Weather and Flood. Read more about these responsibilities by accessing the State Emergency Management Plan.

Resources

[Link to State Emergency Management Plan](#)





Operational Roles and Responsibilities

If you are an employee with the SES in South Australia, you will be required to fulfil an operational role, particularly during emergencies that have state level consequences. This responsibility is integral to achieving the agency's mission of reducing the impacts of emergencies on the community, supporting the safety and wellbeing of South Australians, and ensuring a coordinated and effective response in times of crisis.

Staff fulfilling incident management roles coordinate and lead the response to emergencies, ensuring that all actions are aligned with established protocols and best practice. Their duties may include (but are not limited to) facilitating effective communication between teams and partner agencies and making critical decisions under pressure.

Roles are predominantly office based in either the State Control Centre at Keswick or deployed to the emergency situation within an Incident Management Team or Regional Coordination Centre. There may also be times where staff are required to undertake field roles. The SES has a dedicated State Operations team which will work collaboratively with staff, and their respective manager, to best align their skills and experience to the most appropriate operational role.

Staff are trained in accordance with the Australasian Inter-Service Incident Management System (AIIMS). AIIMS provides a nationally recognised framework for managing incidents and emergencies, ensuring a consistent and effective approach across agencies and jurisdictions. Ongoing professional development is also available to build and refine operational skills and capability for staff.

Operational duties, especially during times of emergency, do not follow a traditional 9am – 5pm work pattern and may instead dictate 12-hour shift patterns, as well as weekend and public holiday shifts. We acknowledge that this can impact upon personal responsibilities and commitments and we strive to support our people during these times. Some of the benefits we offer include:

- additional remuneration for operational shifts, in the form of penalties and overtime, as outlined in relevant industrial instruments
- all meals will be provided when undertaking operational shifts, and
- parent room facilities based in the State Control Centre at Keswick.

Resources

[Link to Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System \(AIIMS\)](#)



Why should you choose us?

Working at the SES provides candidates with a rewarding and purpose-driven career in the emergency services sector, where you can make a meaningful contribution to the safety of our South Australian community.

We welcome candidates from all backgrounds, experiences and skill sets. We believe that a diverse workforce strengthens our organisation and enriches our ability to support our volunteers and the communities we serve.

If you choose to pursue a career with us, you will enjoy a range of benefits, some of which include:

- **meaningful work** that makes a tangible and positive impact on our local community
- **a collaborative and inclusive workplace** that values teamwork, innovation and wellbeing
- **professional development opportunities** including formal learning, on the job training and exposure and development in incident management roles (including national deployments in times of emergencies)
- **flexible working arrangements** including hybrid work options, and
- **convenient facilities** such as car parking, bicycle parking and end-of-trip amenities.