



ST JOHN - THE UNSUNG HEROS 13 FEBRUARY 2001

Member for Flinders Liz Penfold said volunteer St John personnel were among the “unsung heroes” fighting the wildfire that, in its course of destruction, razed homes at Tulka.

“Members of the Port Lincoln Division were on the scene immediately providing a 24-hour emergency first aid service to the firefighters.

“Divisional Superintendent Eddie Patterson said volunteers put in 632 hours over 10 days and treated 200 firefighters,” she said.

Mrs Penfold said local St John officers worked around-the-clock on the Thursday and Friday, then Supt Patterson called in crews from Arno Bay, Wudinna and Whyalla to assist on the Saturday.

“Whyalla brought two vehicles with them – a very beneficial move that increased the number of first aid stations thus aiding rapid treatment,” she said.

Mrs Penfold said it was remarkable that there were no life-threatening injuries considering the ferocity and extent of the fire.

She also congratulated SA Ambulance officers who treated the more serious injuries including at least one case of smoke inhalation.

St John officers treated minor incidents such as eye contamination, bee stings, minor burns and headaches.

Supt Patterson said that, from St John's point of view, everyone should be congratulated for the effort they put in. He said the response from the community, businesses and churches was magnificent.

Mrs Penfold said the cooperation and good will between people and agencies at what has been a time of great stress to all has been inspirational.

“This is the Year of Volunteers, and this disaster gives each of us an opportunity to reflect on the many who keep our communities safe, often at personal expense, and to consider our own role in our community emergency services,” she said

SA WATER PRAISED FOR DEDICATION THROUGH FIRE CRISIS 7 FEBRUARY 2001

Member for Flinders Liz Penfold praised the dedication of SA Water, ETSA and emergency services personnel who maintained water supplies to the city of Port Lincoln throughout the fire crisis.

“The 300 mm diameter pipes bringing the water to Port Lincoln imploded in the heat, and water flow stopped.

“Supplies continued from the storage tank on North Side Hill,” she said.

SA Water staff worked for 14 hours non stop to bring in new pipes, weld them into place and get the water flowing again.

“Staff were on call for 48 hours straight, with most of that time spent in the fire area,” she said. “Like emergency services personnel, they had very little rest in that period.”

Replacement and back-up generators were on site within 12 hours to take over from machinery damaged by the fire.

Mrs Penfold said damage to pumping stations and generators was minimised by the heroic efforts of CFS volunteers.

“These firefighters went in among the fire to clear breaks around the stations,” she said.

Electricity had been cut however ETSA workers then came in to repair damaged lines and thus restore electricity so that pumping could resume.

“We can all be proud of each one of these men and women, each one of whom can tell a story of courage, endurance and service above and beyond the call of duty.

“Their efforts and their selflessness contained the disaster,” she said.