



Media Release

Victoria State Emergency Service

Monday 14 October 2019

Your Family, Our Family – Celebrating the 13,000 individuals who support our volunteers

This week the Victoria State Emergency (VICSES) kicks off the Your Family, Our Family campaign- celebrating the faces behind our incredible volunteers, all of whom support our members rain, hail or shine, to ensure they are able to support their community.

With over 5,000 volunteers within VICSES, we will be celebrating approximately 13,000 family members and friends, each of which who support VICSES every day.

Ahmad Alhamid migrated to Australia from Syria four years ago when he signed up to volunteer with the VICSES Emerald Unit. He wanted to help people, but was worried that the training requirements, responding to emergency incidents and long days would take a toll on his family.

If he was supporting his community, would he be there for the people around him?

But what has made the role so achievable is in fact, his family. With the support of his wife Nicole and four year old daughter Hana, volunteering with VICSES has been made possible and he's loved every minute.

At the sudden sound of the pager calling for Ahmad to assist his community, Nicole will pick up where he needs to leave off; this can be from having a meal cooked, to looking after Hana alone for long periods of time.

Nicole also works during the week, but without hesitation she is ready so that Ahmad can play his part in supporting his community in times of desperate need.

Volunteering and emergency work has become a part of the family for Ahmad, with Hana attending VICSES training sessions and community engagement events alongside Ahmad.

Volunteer organisations often focus attention on the sacrifices their members make to serve their community, but the spotlight is rarely shined on those who support each volunteer, allowing them to respond to an emergency 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

Your Family, Our Family highlights the support and sacrifices family members and friends make on a daily basis, so that the Victorian community can feel a little safer knowing that VICSES volunteers will be there for any emergency.

For more information, contact:

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Quotes attributable to Ahmad Alhamid - VICSES Emerald Unit volunteer,

"I've been a VICSES volunteer for over four years, and I can say with pride that I have loved every minute of it. It makes everything worth it when I see how much I can help my community. I'm very lucky that I have the support of Nicole and Hana, I don't think I would be able to continue in this role if I didn't."

"My family are my priority, but being able to support my community in their time of need also means a great deal to me. It can be hard to find a balance, but Nicole is fantastic at keeping things moving if I need to be off at an incident".

Quotes attributable to Nicole Lane – Ahmad's wife

"We're very proud of Ahmad. To see where he has come from and all the great work he is doing now to support his community is truly commendable. Even if it's hard sometimes when he has to run off, it makes it all worthwhile and us very proud to see him selflessly helping those in need."

"It makes me proud to give Ahmad the support he needs to continue in his role as volunteer. I know that my support for him in turn supports the community. I guess we're all doing our bit to help each other".

Quotes attributable to Tim Wiebusch - VICSES Chief Officer, Operations

"Your family, Our Family campaign is so important; we often have opportunities to thank our fantastic volunteers for all they do. This week is about the acknowledging the tremendous support and often sacrifices their family and friends make to ensure their loved one can serve the community."

"Family and friends play a huge part in SES volunteers being able to do what they do and I really want to thank each and every friend and family member who support our volunteers."