



Media Release

Victoria State Emergency Service

Wednesday 16 October 2019

A family affair in support of our volunteers – Your Family, Our Family

This week the Victoria State Emergency (VICSES) kicked 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 are celebrating approximately 13,000 family members and friends, each of which who support VICSES every day.

Neil Allen has been a VICSES volunteer for almost 10 years. As Deputy Unit Controller for the VICSES Mansfield Unit, he not only supports the community during emergency incidents, but also trains and leads fellow volunteers at the unit.

It's safe to say, most of Neil's time is dedicated to volunteering.

As a working father of four, finding a balance can be difficult. But for Neil, this is achievable, with 3/4 of his children members at the unit, and wife Jodie an associate member.

With each member of the family exposed to the unit and volunteering role, they know well the support Neil requires, allowing him to make this contribution to the community. Without it, volunteering in this capacity would be difficult.

When called to an emergency incident at odd hours during the night, or in the middle of the family card game, Neil knows the family will pick up where leaves off (and maybe cheat!) and often attend incidents or VICSES training nights with him.

Volunteering and emergency work has become a family affair for the Allen family, with each member supporting one another through the at times, demanding role.

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 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:

VICSES State Media Duty Officer
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Quotes attributable to Neil Allen – Deputy Controller, VICSES Gisborne Unit

“Being a VICSES volunteer has been so rewarding, I have a great team at the unit, and together we make a real difference to our community. I’m very lucky that I have the support of Josie, and my kids, I don’t think I would be able to continue in this role if I didn’t.”

“Particularly after a tough incident involving trauma, just going home to my family and knowing I have their unspoken support and love, it makes it all worthwhile and a little easier”.

Quotes attributable to Josie – Neil’s wife

“We’re very proud of Neil. I know particularly how demanding the role can be but to see all the great work he is doing and the support he is providing to his community and fellow volunteers, 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’s rewarding in itself to be able to give Neil the support he needs to continue in his role as a 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

“This campaign is so important, we’re always thanking our fantastic volunteers for all they do, but we forget that their families help make the volunteer role possible by supporting them and allowing them to serve the community.”

“It’s rare to see the focus off our volunteers, but it’s necessary to recognise that family and friends play a huge part in the volunteer role and I really want to thank each and every family member who supports our volunteers.”