

RESEARCH REPORT

Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authority (AFAC)

Firefighters Mutual Bank
**GIRLS' FIRE AND EMERGENCY
SERVICES CAMP PILOT, Sydney**
2nd – 8th December, 2018

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FOREWORD

This report has been prepared for the Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authority (AFAC) and Fire & Rescue NSW (FRNSW). It explores the efficacy of a camp model for attracting and/or recruiting young women to fire and emergency services (FES), and for supporting, developing and retaining current personnel, specifically women in FES. As such inclusion strategies, leadership and capacity building are key area of interest with future potential to inform organisational change, policy implementation and strategic direction. .

The report has been commissioned in response to organisational goals and aspirations that seek to explore and develop strategies for attracting and retaining a diverse workforce in FES agencies locally and Nationally. It details research findings from the 2018 piloting of the Fire Fighters Mutual Bank Girls' Fire and Emergency Services camp (GFES) in Sydney, New South Wales. This report includes a selection of data collected over the six day camp from the camp leaders and camp participants, and other research mechanisms. Details of the research process are explained with supporting data and analytic comments. The report is divided into a variety of sections which are supported by evidence and summed up by recommendations.

This research has been funded via a Faculty of Education Seeding grant which in addition to exploring the impact of the camp also serves as an important step in further developing the research partnership between AFAC, FRNSW and Monash University. This Australian pilot project builds upon international proof of concept developed in 2016 and 2017 and will broker new directions for Monash small grants and category 2/3 grants in the future.

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- *The Fire Fighters Mutual Bank Girls' Fire and Emergency Services camp* (GFES) participants including the 9 leaders and 3 activity facilitators who contributed and the amazing 20 young women
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research reports on findings from the pilot of a fire and emergency services (FES) camp for young women held at YMCA Camp Yarramundi, 2nd – 7th December, 2018. It aims to build an understanding of the experience of the camp as well as the impact on participants with FES industry inclusion and diversity agendas, expectations and challenges in mind. The aim of this report is to present qualitative data collected during the pilot of *The Fire Fighters Mutual Bank Girls' Fire and Emergency Services camp* (GFES) (henceforth known as 'the camp' or GFES camp) and to provide data driven recommendations to lead agencies, the Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authority (AFAC) Workforce Management Group, Fire & Rescue New South Wales (FRNSW) and their partner NSW agencies, Rural Fire Service (RFS) and State Emergency Service (SES). This project is without a doubt ambitious and optimistic, and in the first instance a courageous and promising example of interagency collaboration where formally none has existed.

During the camp pilot and induction days at Camp Yarramundi, over 80 hours of activity was observed across 8 days, with data collected from over 1250 photographs, 1000 minutes of video recordings, 650 minutes of audio recordings, four (4) focus groups with 20 young female participants (henceforth known as 'the campers'), nine (9) interviews with FES volunteers (henceforth known as 'the leaders'), twelve (12) surveys from leaders and activity facilitators, and six (6) post camp follow up phone interviews. This report uses this data in two ways. Firstly, it shares evidence of the impact of the experience on those who participated in it. The key finding here is that the camp model (the model) has significant, measurable and enduring impact on the participants. Secondly, the data is used to identify themes that may speak to factors that enhance/afford the inclusion of women in the FES sector, as well as those factors that might inhibit/constrain such interest or inclusion. In this regard, the findings can also inform broader diversity and inclusion agendas, and recommendations are provided throughout with regards to this key sector focus.

The report highlights that, from the point of view of the participants (the campers and the leaders)¹, the GFES pilot camp was a huge success. Not one camper commented negatively on the idea, concept, organisation, management, staff, venue, activities, bunk house or food – in fact the dominant theme to come from the campers was one of gratitude and appreciation. This group of 20 young women were grateful for being given this opportunity to follow a dream, challenge themselves, and imagine what could be in their future. They each took their involvement seriously and walked away with substantial personal and technical gains. Data identified the following gains and impacts (affordances) in relation to the campers:

- Optimal challenge (face fears, push, overcome, 'I can do it')
- Pleasure (thrill, enjoyment, fun)
- Technical knowledge/information
- Physicality/physical skill development
- Mental and emotional skill development
- Sociality, teamwork and leadership skill development
- FES identity development (including career option and recruitment)
- Future life impact
- Lingering impact
- FES role modelling (the impact of the leaders)

A broad range of occupational experiences were provided in a safe and supported environment and this resulted in physical, social, emotional and intellectual outcomes. Notably, these outcomes/impact lingered some 4 months after the camp when a number of campers and leaders report changed behaviour, renewed confidence, and significant embodied memories of the experience. This is important as it signals the camp has a lasting effect and that if this is a result then there is every chance it will influence future involvement in FES activities e.g. recruitment and leadership potential

The camp also had a significant impact on the leaders who volunteered at the camp. All leaders were highly motivated and engaged in the camp and report positively the idea, concept, organisation, management, staff, venue, activities, and also provide string insider information with regards to industry diversity and inclusion matters as well as future iterations of the camp. This group of 9 women were thrilled to be given this leadership and development opportunity and each report their involvement was driven by a desire to build the confidence of the campers and open FES to them. They each took their involvement seriously and walked away with substantial personal and personal gains. Data identified the following gains and impacts (affordances) in relation to the leaders:

- Altruism and role modelling
- Voice, confidence and courage

¹ This project did not research, collect data on, or in any other way evaluate the technical, resource and personnel aspects involved in the set up or day to day running of the camp. This brief was solely the responsibility of lead project agency FRNSW.

- Satisfied a need for further professional development and challenges
- Quiet leadership development
- Strengthened team and observation skills

Thus, the report highlights affordances and opportunities that emerged from the data.

The report also used this qualitative data to identify constraints or factors in relation to the camp as well as those that may be in need of sector/industry attention. On the former, there was no data to report – the overwhelming response was support for the camp and the model. With regards to the latter, the data identified the following barriers or constraints for women in the FES workforce²:

- Workplace culture
- Male champions (can be an affordance or barrier)
- Women have to work smarter not harder
- Gendered expectations and assumptions regarding skills/capabilities

The report also gives consideration to other findings that did not sit easily within camper or leader data and that when taken with that data provide a strong outsider and insider view of the camp processes and structures including feedback for future improvements as well as diversity advice for lead agencies. This is valuable information from the participants and researchers and could be used to supplement the more technical FRNSW report on the camp logistics. In this regard the report found the following other important factors:

- Multi-agency model
- YMCA partnership
- Chain of command and communication
- Media coverage and impact
- Sustainability and ongoing viability of the GFES model
- The enthusiast and GFES camp champion
- How to diversify the workforce (inclusion and diversity strategies for FES agencies)
- How to improve the camp (leader and camper feedback)
- Support for the model as a recruitment strategy

In conclusion, the data collected during this GFES camp pilot suggests that the camp was a success in gaining the attention and interest of the young women who attended. It had a significant, measurable and enduring impact on the campers. With this in mind, it is suggested that if FES wish to **recruit** more women into their ranks they would do well to develop a multi-phased and multi-pronged strategy that includes:

- capturing the attention of particular kinds of young women through schools, sport and other community activities
- working more closely with schools and school career advisers, as well as community groups and organisations
- capturing the attention of particular kinds of women (all ages) through sport, gyms, other work places and involved in community activities
- targeted recruitment from within community groups to attain a more diverse workforce
- actively seeking out people from non-hegemonic backgrounds and outside FES e.g. recruit for sexual, cultural, ethnic, religious, and Indigenous diversity
- continuing to refine the GFES camp model to enhance scalability and transferability to other single agencies and States
- longitudinal research to gather data about the long-term impact of the camp on campers and leaders

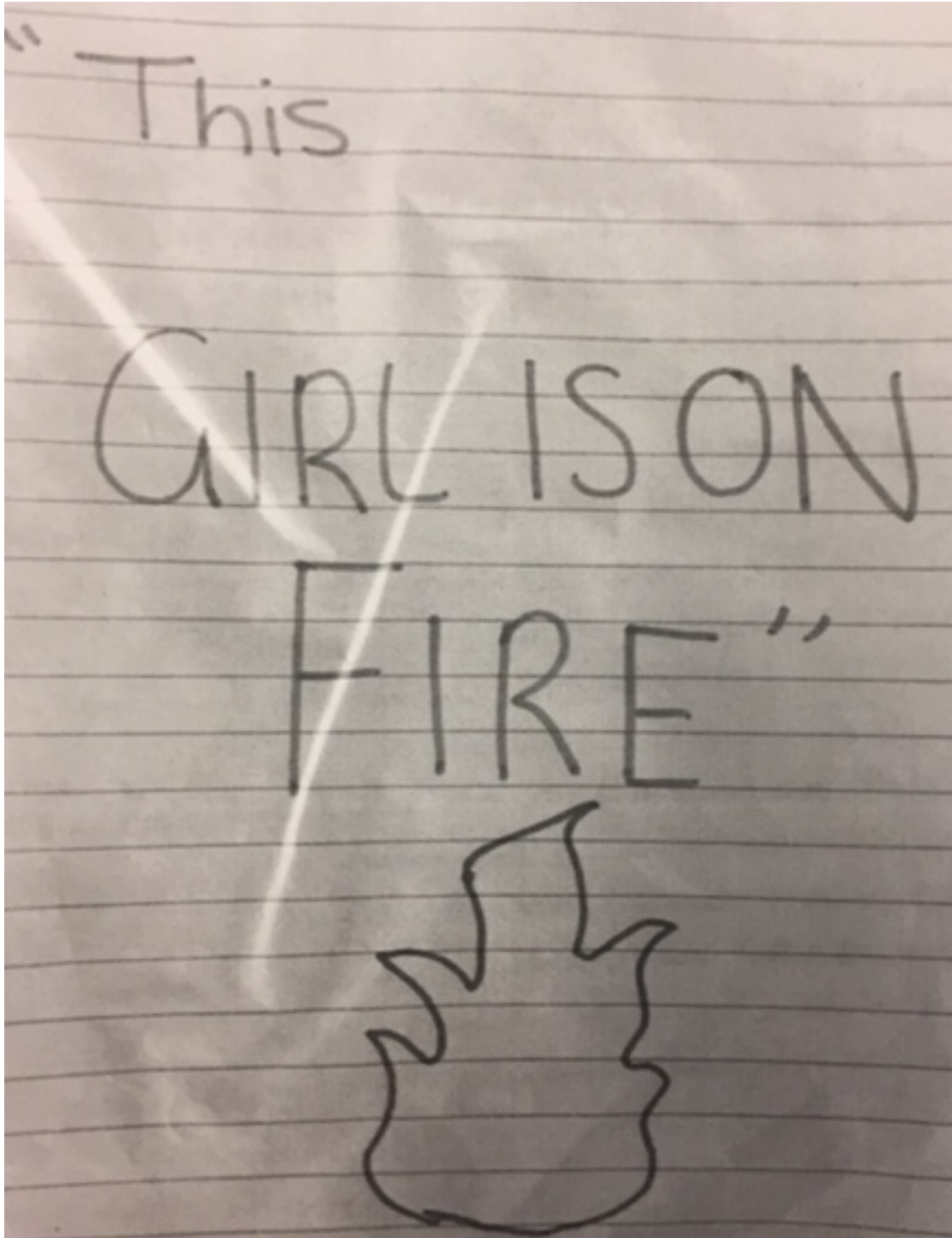
Whilst it was not in the scope of this report to explore, data suggested that some form of advertising/promotional campaign may be useful to simply make FES 'an option' for young women.

The data collected during this GFES camp pilot suggests that the camp was a success in gaining the attention and interest of the women who attended. It had a significant, measurable and enduring impact on the leaders. Additionally, the report reinforces that gender is a complex social structure that influences the ways in which both younger and older

² Please note: there were no specific questions asked about barriers/constraints in workplaces, rather these themes were developed from the responses to questions around workplaces supporting involvement in the camp, returning to work actions as well as future career, leadership or development needs. In short the general conversation that flowed during the interviews.

women experience and view themselves and their future occupational potential. With these findings in mind, it is suggested that if FES wish to **retain and develop** women in their ranks they would do well to develop a multi-phased and multi-pronged strategy that includes:

- ensuring all managers abide by anti-discrimination policies and have strong communication skills
- addressing and finding a solution for exclusionary practices in FES workplace culture
- benchmarking of subtle and unconscious cultural practices in the workplace via the identification of social bias rates and subsequent training to ensure a safe workplace for all members of the FES community
- providing equity programs for FES women who wish to advance their careers e.g. mentoring, development and training



Journal entry 1, This girl is on fire

INTRODUCTION

This research was conducted with the support of a Monash University Faculty of Education Seeding grant. From this perspective, the research aimed to continue to nurture and develop the industry partnership between Monash University, the Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authority (AFAC) and Fire & Rescue NSW (FRNSW). This was done via a joint collaborative research project to collect data capable of supporting identified gender equity, diversity and inclusion challenges of fire and emergency services in Australia. With the support of the AFAC Workforce Management group, and under the guidance of lead agency FRNSW and partners RFS and SES, a small pilot project emerged - *The Fire Fighters Mutual Bank Girls' Fire and Emergency Services camp* (the camp/the GFES camp).

In relation to this pilot the aim of this research was to determine the efficacy of FES camp model to become an organisational recruitment, retention, leadership and/or development strategy for FES agencies to meet some of their diversity and inclusion needs/deliverables.

The research questions supportive of these aims were:

- Are fire and emergency service camps for young women an effective recruitment strategy? (young women participants, the campers)
- Are fire and emergency service camps for young women an effective retention, leadership and professional development strategy for those currently working in the FES workforce? (people who volunteer, the leaders)

This report focuses on sharing some possible answers to these questions as they pertain to the recruitment, retention, leadership and professional development needs of the FES in Australia. It is structured in six (6) sections:

Section 1 explains the research methodology

Section 2 identifies and discusses themes and findings from the camper data

Section 3 identifies and discusses themes and findings from the leader data

Section 4 identifies and discusses other relevant findings and observations

Section 5 summarises the findings and recommendations

Section 6 provides interview and focus group questions in an appendix

SECTION 1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The role of this research was to build an understanding of the participants' experience of the GFES camp as well as its impact on them. This was done with matters of diversity and inclusion in mind, necessitating the use of a variety of data collection methods across the week.

Participants

There were three groups of participants in this research. Group 1 were twenty (n=20) female identified young people aged 15-18 years – the campers. Group 2 were nine (n=9) female identified FES volunteers – the leaders. Group 3 were three (n=3) female identified FES volunteers – activity facilitators. More participant details are provided in Sections 2 & 3.

Method

Ethnography framed this project as it provides an opportunity for researchers to immerse themselves in the everyday activities of the camp in order to collect data. This insider status is a valuable approach as it creates rapport and makes collecting data easier, with deeper relationship resulting in a richness of data.

Methods traditionally associated with ethnography were used including: participant observation, fieldwork notes, interviews, focus groups, surveys, document collection, and participant journaling. These were aided by newer forms of data collection in visual methodologies such as photography and videography. Together these methods have the ability to provide a rich set of data about the workings of the camp and the experiences of the participants in them by capturing voice (interviews and focus groups) as well as in situ action (photographs, video, observation).

Methods deployed during the camp:

- Surveys (n=9 leaders, n=3 activity facilitators): basic demographic information, camp structure, individual roles, activities conducted, perceptions of the camps and in workplace
- Interview (n=9 leaders): one to one interviews about camp experiences and roles, camp structure and process, the role of the camps, observations of the impact of the camps on young women, career progression and other aspects related to being a woman in fire and emergency services
- Focus groups (n=4 groups with 5 campers in each): small groups came together to answer questions about the camp experience, impacts and career choices
- Document collection (during the camp): for example daily schedules, lanyards, and other information distributed; media texts
- Participant observation (of campers, leaders, activities, events): on site observation of interactions, processes, practices, and outcomes of involvement
- Fieldwork notes (researchers): notes taken during the camp
- Photography/videography (environment, campers, leaders, activities, events): photographs, video, and GoPro recording to document the experience of the camp, including the scene/place/environment, processes, practices, interactions, activities, and events
- Evening debrief (campers and leaders): modelled using the Activist Approach the session was designed to provide campers with voice, and facilitates feedback from the campers to the leaders about the activities of that day, instructional techniques, and leader skill development. Used to identify leader strengths and weaknesses and for leadership development. The report does not share data on this aspect of the camp.

Methods employed after the camp:

- Post camp interviews (n=6 campers; n=1 leader):
- Post camp written email response (n=2 campers; n=7 leaders)

Data analysis

Interviews and focus groups were audio recorded and later transcribed verbatim using the Smartdocs transcription service. Photographs, videos and fieldwork notes added a visual aspect to the data and were drawn in to support the audio. A typical two stage coding process was used to analyse the data. This started with initial or open coding of words, images and observations. Initial codes of leader transcripts were aligned to the interview questions and included: demographics, the process, motivations, take homes, career impact, and workplace support.

The second stage involved a more focussed and selective coding process to refine the initial codes and tease out moments of meaning making in the texts. Once codes were identified transcripts were then analysed for patterns, relationships, similarities, differences, and frequency to identify emergent themes. In Sections 2 and 3 sets of themes from the camper and leader data are identified and discussed.

In order to centralise diversity in this project, the findings are analysed using a feminist lens. Therefore, themes and discussions focus on the experience and impact of the camp on the participants in order to identify factors that may enhance/afford the inclusion of them or other women in the FES industry, as well as those factors that might inhibit/constrain such interest or inclusion.



Image 1, On the job learning

SECTION 2 THEMES AND FINDINGS FROM THE CAMPER DATA



Image 2, Campers RFS day

(Camper 13) Yeah same that they've gone out of their way to put this camp together to give us 20 girls that have been invited to come to this camp a chance to make the world a better place, give us a chance of having what we want in a career, and even if you don't want to become part of the emergency services giving us life skills that we'll need when we're older.

INTRODUCTION

The campers selected to be involved in the GFES pilot played an important role in determining the impact of the camp and offer useful information for possible future iterations. They were highly motivated and activated young people and came to the camp with a genuine desire to participate as best they could and whilst all did not enter desiring to join the FES all left with an amazing experience of working as a member of the FES family. It is impossible at this stage to determine the recruitment impact though some evidence of that kind is provided below. What is very clear however, is that the camp has had a significant, measurable and enduring impact on the campers. This ranges from being challenged physically, learning technical skills, working in cohesive units/teams, increased confidence, and maintained or new interest in FES. None of the young women overlooked or took for granted all of the details, efforts and intentions of the adults, agencies and organisations involved in delivering this GFES model to them. Gratitude was a key theme throughout the week and in the data – they were quite simply thrilled and privileged to be invited and selected the camp. It changed their lives in the moment they experienced and the impact lingers on.

(Camper 12) Gratitude for everything that they've done really because you don't really think too much about it, but then all the leaders have told us all about their experiences and how much effort they've put in just to get to the stages where they are in their career so -

(Camper 15) Determination.

(Camper 12) Inspired.

(Camper 11) I'm very grateful.

In this section, we learn about the camp from the campers via data presented by way of findings around camper diversity with the aim of identifying affordances and opportunities for future inclusion and diversity strategies. This is followed by a substantial amount of research findings which reflect the campers' experience of the camp, its immediate and lingering impact on them, as well as insights around how to improve future iterations. A key aim of this section is to drill the data to identify strategies and ideas that may have the potential to inform FES diversity and inclusion strategies, most especially in relation to recruitment.

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS WITH A DIVERSITY LENS

Affordances

Camp information: the young women received information about the camp through school, radio coverage, volunteer organisations, *Girls on Fire* website, family or friends, suggesting methods to attract campers were successful

Gender: The participants in this research were homogenous with regards to gender identity. All participants in all groups identified as female

Geography: A geography lens was applied inasmuch as campers were recruited from across the state, with strong representation from rural areas. This diversity factor had a big impact on the young women who reported how important and different it was to work with people from urban and rural areas

Age: There was good diversity in terms of age where attempts were made to diversify the campers selected to reflect age as a diversity lens. Ages ranged from 14-19 years.

Previous FES experience: twelve (n=10) of the 20 campers had some form of FES experience including RFS, SES, first aid/ambulance. Two (n=2) were involved in community activities e.g. Girl Guides. The remaining eight (n=8) had no previous experience. A number (n=6) had a family member or close family friend involved in FES organisations. All campers (n=20) reported an 'interest' in FES which precipitated their application. If genuine diversification of the FES workforce is desired then recruitment measures may be best applied outside those participants already involved in FES activities or with families in them. It could be argued that 'fishing in the same pool' will not diversify the workforce and that those young people already involved are likely to stay involved.

(Camper 3) Yeah, everyone's just looking at each other like, "I hope I get along with these people," but it was so easy. You get it in your head, in your mind that, "What's going to happen? What if they don't like me? What if I don't like them?" But once you've broken the barrier, you're just -

(Camper 4) Yeah, once you're in. Everyone's been so great. There's not one person that I could say, "Yeah, I don't like them." But I loved everyone here. Everyone's been so good. Even the leaders.

- Recommendation: Continue to recruit across age ranges though also consider the needs of older and/or FES experienced campers when forming groups
- Recommendation: Continue to recruit with a geography lens in mind
- Recommendation: Target school career counsellors and other community organisations as key informants in promotion of FES to young women
- Recommendation: Consider recruiting young people with no previous FES experience or familial contacts/support to broaden the pool of applicants

Opportunities

New lens and new strategies are required to attract new people to FES, this means 'fishing outside the current pool' is necessary. The following data and suggestions could diversify the FES workforce even more.

Sexuality: The campers were not asked to provide this information. It should be included in the future and may prove a worthwhile recruitment lens

Culture/ethnicity: Of the twenty (n=20) campers all but five (n=5) identified as white/Anglo/ Australian, two (n=2) of this five identified as Pacific Islanders, with three (n=3) of this five claiming Australian with a mix (usually from one parent's background). This latter identification is considered unreliable as most participants didn't know what ethnicity was, some claimed it to be religious.

(Camper 11) I think when you have the diversity and the different groups you gain more respect for everyone out there in our community helping us. It's not just little kids who know fire fighters, there's also all the people behind the scenes who are pushing for all this to happen, and it's not just about the people in trucks, none of that can happen without all the behind the scene workers.

(Camper 13) Everyone's the same. When you step into camp everyone's the exact same. Everyone's nervous, scared, happy, excited. One thing I was, and I know that some of the blue team were as well, they came up to me and introduced themselves and they were nervous to actually come up and talk to me because they thought that I would've been a little bit weird in a way, like angry to be spoken to. I don't know, everyone was nervous.

- Recommendation: Consider targeted recruitment strategies for ethnically and culturally diverse participants via a variety of culturally specific strategies and organisations

Movement/physicality: All of the participants (n=20) in this research reported positive, early and lifelong experiences with movement, including sport, physical education, gym/training, and/or other physical activity. This suggests movement is a significant factor in determining interest in FES. Of note is the number involved in team sports, and particularly those usually associated as non-traditional sports for women, as well as the variety of activities engaged in. The table below provides some insightful data in this regard.

CURRENT MOVEMENT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PURSUITS OF THE CAMPERS

Team sports (number)	Individual sports	Recreation activities
Soccer (n=6) Touch (n=4) Cricket, volleyball, netball and futsal (n=2) Hockey, European handball and softball (n=1)	Swimming (n=5) Tennis, athletics, running, gymnastics, sport aerobics (n=1) Fitness, triathlon, crossfit, weight training (n=1)	Dance Jog (not run), Hiking Casual bushwalking Nippers, surfing Water aerobics Cheerleading Girl guides
<i>Comment from data:</i> <i>I like all sports as well like team sports, I do it with school and it's so fun ... It feels good to be able to do cool stuff ... I just loved working in a team.</i>	<i>Comment from data:</i> <i>... just jog because I like doing it, with the hiking I really like doing it because it's just something that Mum and I do.</i>	<i>Comment from data:</i> <i>[Why water aerobics] ... the little old ladies, they're so cute. It looked like they were having fun, so I wanted to join in ... I make friends with the little old ladies.</i>

Table 1, Current movement and physical activity pursuits of the campers

- Recommendation: Targeted recruitment practices could occur in team sports settings, likely those traditionally perceived to be non-traditional for females, especially soccer. There also seems to be some benefit in approaching gyms and other leisure related groups/community organisations to attract young women in the 17-21 years bracket

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The data below was collected via in camp focus groups, participant journals and observations, and post camp feedback. Together these form a set of responses to the broad research question:

- Are fire and emergency service camps for young women an effective recruitment strategy? (young women participants/campers)

The following data shares information ranging from favourite and least favourite activities to personal and life impact, career choices and suggestions for improving future strategies for engaging young women in FES. This is insightful data that should guide future FES diversity and inclusion approaches as well as GFES camps.

Favourite and least favourite activities

It was important to find out what the campers enjoyed, firstly because to create an enduring attachment to anything it must be pleasurable to the participant. Hence the activities should be both enjoyable and optimally challenging to increase the likelihood of seeking it out in the future e.g. by FES volunteering and/or career choices. In short, the activities needed to have an impact. Secondly, their views of the activities can guide future inclusions or exclusions and hence their feedback can be used to improve the GFES model. Data confirms the top 3 activities favoured by the participants were:

- SES boats on the Nepean River
- Vehicle extrication
- YMCA led ropes courses



Image 3, SES day Nepean river

Q: What did you find that you enjoyed the most, what was your favourite activity?

(Camper 8) I liked the SES stuff hands down [why] ... I don't know, I really like water so that's one of the reasons ... I guess just being able to learn how to rescue someone and the correct processes to take within that. That was very interesting. I really liked that.

(Camper 19) The boat. The boat.

(Camper 20) I'm thinking the boats too, they were fun.

(Camper 17) Probably the – out on the boats with the SES guys practicing the rescuing someone out of the water. And the hoses.



Image 4, Vehicle extrication

Whilst it was very hard for campers to decide on a least favourite activity when pushed it came down to personal comfort with an activity and likely difficulty, unfamiliarity or fear which made the activity less favourable. The heat and late evenings/tiredness were also mentioned as factors making things less favourable. At a pinch the following 3 activities were mentioned by a few campers as least favoured:

- Breathing apparatus (BA)
- Personal training (PT)
- Cave maze

(Camper 4) The heat. But that comes with firefighting. Rolling the hose. I suck at it.

(Camper 5) There wasn't anything I didn't like - well, the only thing that I didn't really enjoy was how late we were having the talks from the various different people. I thought they were interesting but I just think because we had such big days, everyone was just dozing off, so it was hard to concentrate.

(Camper 6) Cave maze for me ... I do not like tight spaces or darkness as well, I don't really like the dark, and everything was just so hot in there. I liked the experience and I loved the teamwork, but I wouldn't do it again. I'm glad that I did do it because now I know that that's not something that I enjoy.

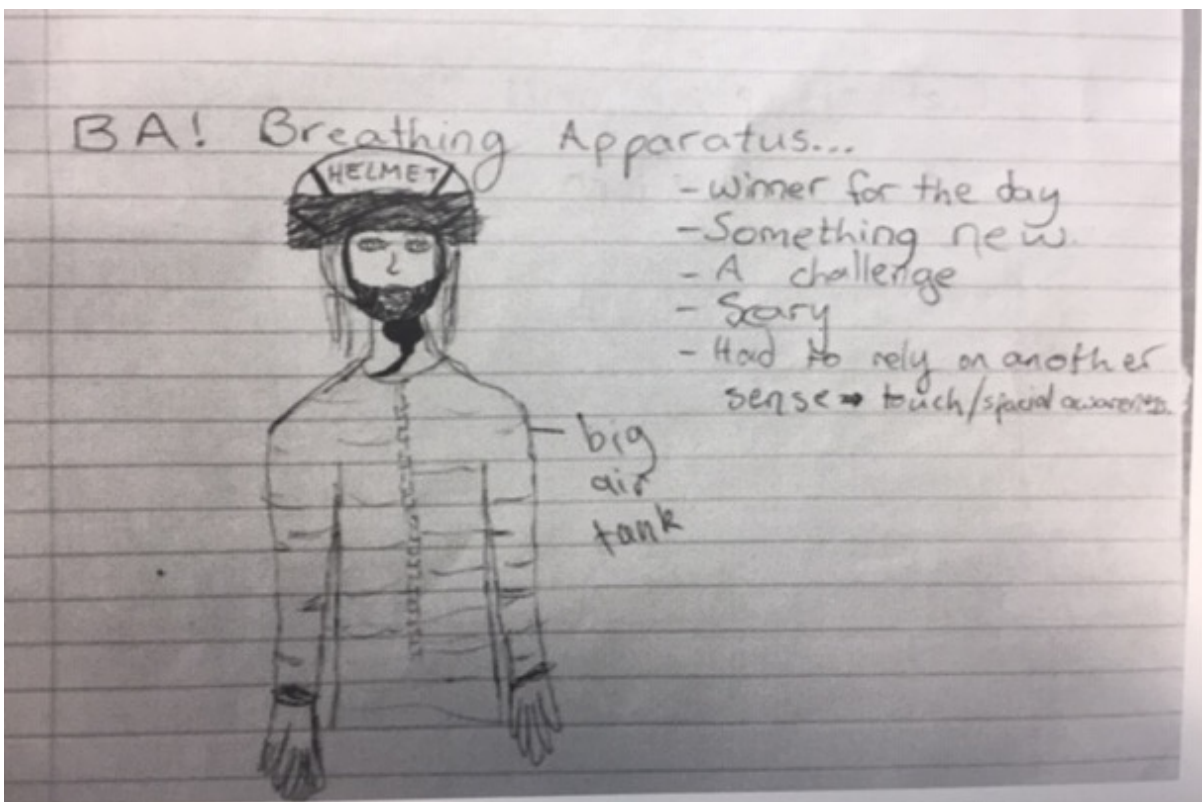
(Camper 9) Probably the PT.

(Camper 17) Yeah ... the BA because like I said the other day two parts of my brain was – the logical side was saying you're getting enough air, calm down and the illogical side was saying you're not getting enough air panic. Because it felt like – because they were just – it was just giving the same amount of air as you were letting out, so it felt like I wasn't getting enough air because there wasn't lots of air that I could just take in and waste.

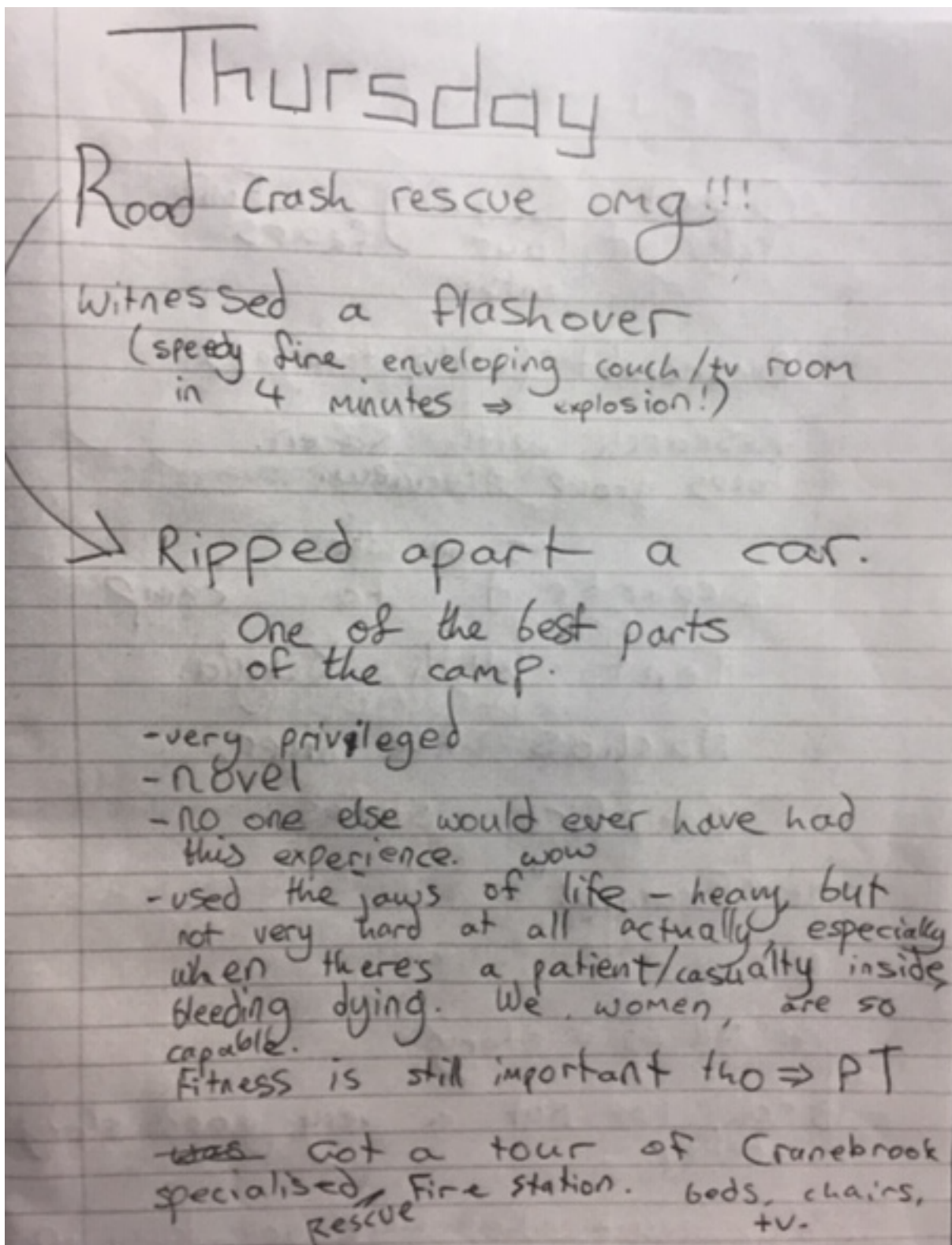
(Camper 19) The BA I thought was hard and it was really hot, and I felt like I was going to bleed in the mask, I wouldn't know what to do.



Image 5, Cave maze preparation



Journal entry 2, The BA! Breathing apparatus ...



Journal entry 3, Favourite activity (vehicle extrication)



Image 6, Breathing apparatus

Theme: Pleasure (thrill, enjoyment, fun)

There is no doubt that all participants found the activities facilitated in the camp by both FES and YMCA personnel thrilling. The terms novel, different and new came up more frequently than 'fun' suggesting that contrary to common belief young women enjoy being dragged in to activities via novelty and pushed in the direction of optimal challenge. Even those campers somewhat familiar with the expectations of work in FES because of their involvement in volunteering were suitably developed in terms of technical skills, team cohesion, working on the edge of discomfort, pushing through challenges, and making other adjustments necessary to work within a multi-agency model.

(Camper 2) I really enjoyed the whole camp but I really did also like the SES part. When we went on the boats, that was really fun and I learnt a lot.

(Camper 3) I just thought the thrill of it [SES boats]. It was really good plus I had my - out of all three, I was looking forward to SES the most because I feel like that was more my side of things. I love getting out in the water, doing lots of stuff. It was really fun to just - it felt really good when you pull the dummies into the boat and that. I felt like you were actually doing something really important. But no, I loved it. Yeah, it was really good.

Q: Has it been a bit of a high?

(Camper 7) Yeah.

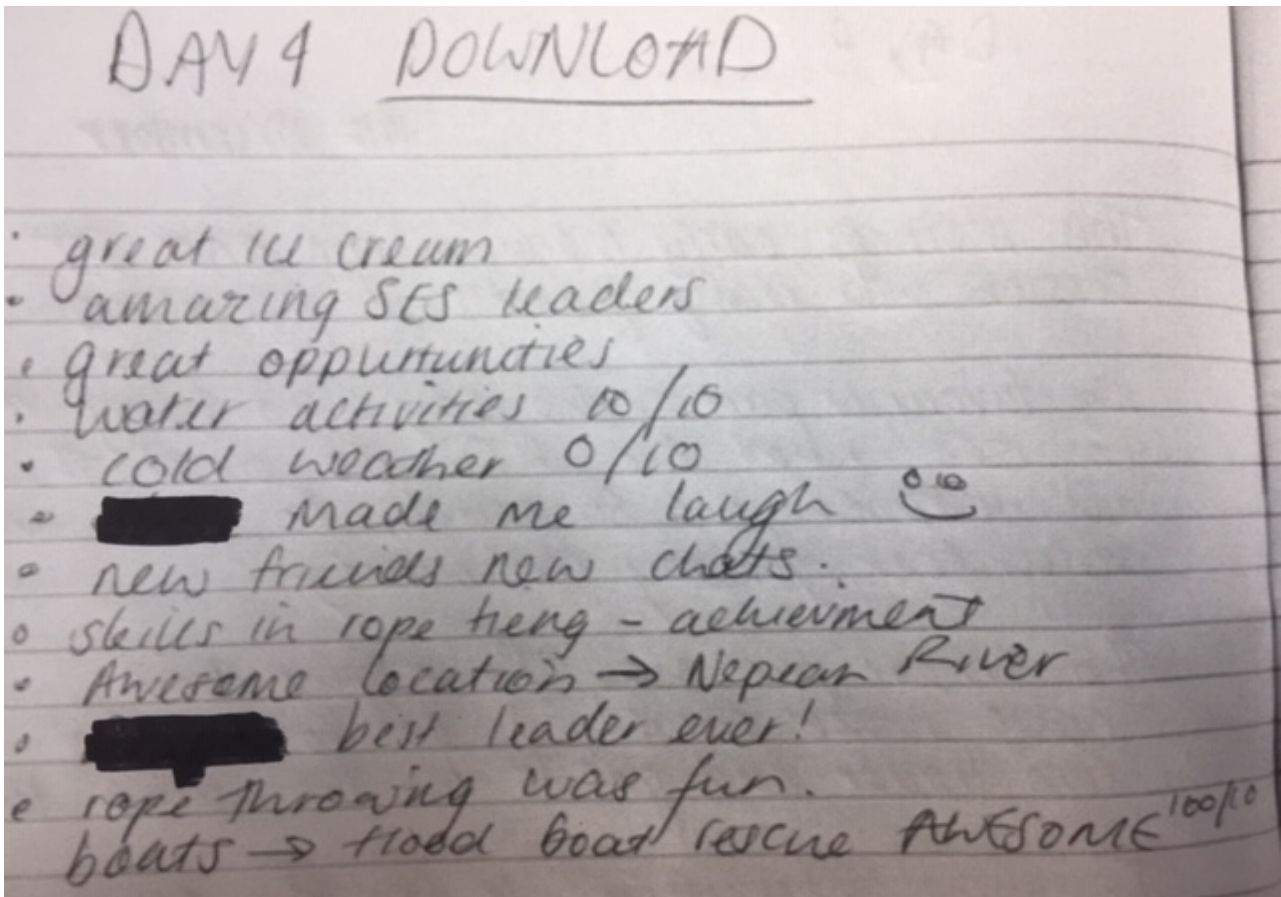
[General consensus]

(Camper 12) I loved the variety between the activities and having other people come in and talk to you. I liked it how everything was challenging, there wasn't just easily little things. You had to challenge yourself to go on the high ropes, you had to challenge yourself when you put on the BAs and you had to challenge yourself when you took the boats out, and all those little things that challenged you. I really loved how we got to hear all these different ways that all these leaders and everyone else had gotten into the services because they always say, "You can just go on the internet and you can find it all there", but you don't know what to actually search for on the internet and that's really helped me.

(Camper 13) My highlight was today when we went to the station and learnt how to get someone out of car with the tools that we could use when we're in the emergency services. I've never experienced something like that before. I've always seen other people do it and I've always wondered wow - I always thought that the tools would've been really light, but it turns out that they're really heavy and the amount of pressure that they have, how they can squish a car and crunch them together and pull things apart is really cool.

(Camper 14) Yeah. It's just the rush, it's really fun. I do it for the enjoyment.

(Camper 16) Well I really liked all of them to be honest. I thought there was a good mix between - the stuff like high ropes and stuff which was team-based activities, I really like the team based. And then the actual stuff they would use in the emergency services like all the hoses, the SES boats and saving people, the BA, stuff like that I think it was a good mixture. I really liked it all.



Journal entry 4, Pleasure, novel and new AWESOME 100/10



Image 7, Thrill

Theme: Optimal challenge (face fears, push, overcome, 'I can do it')

(Camper 1) Hell yeah. Yeah, I want to be able to throw stuff across the room, knowing that you can just show off your power and go, "I may not be a boy but I can do this and this."

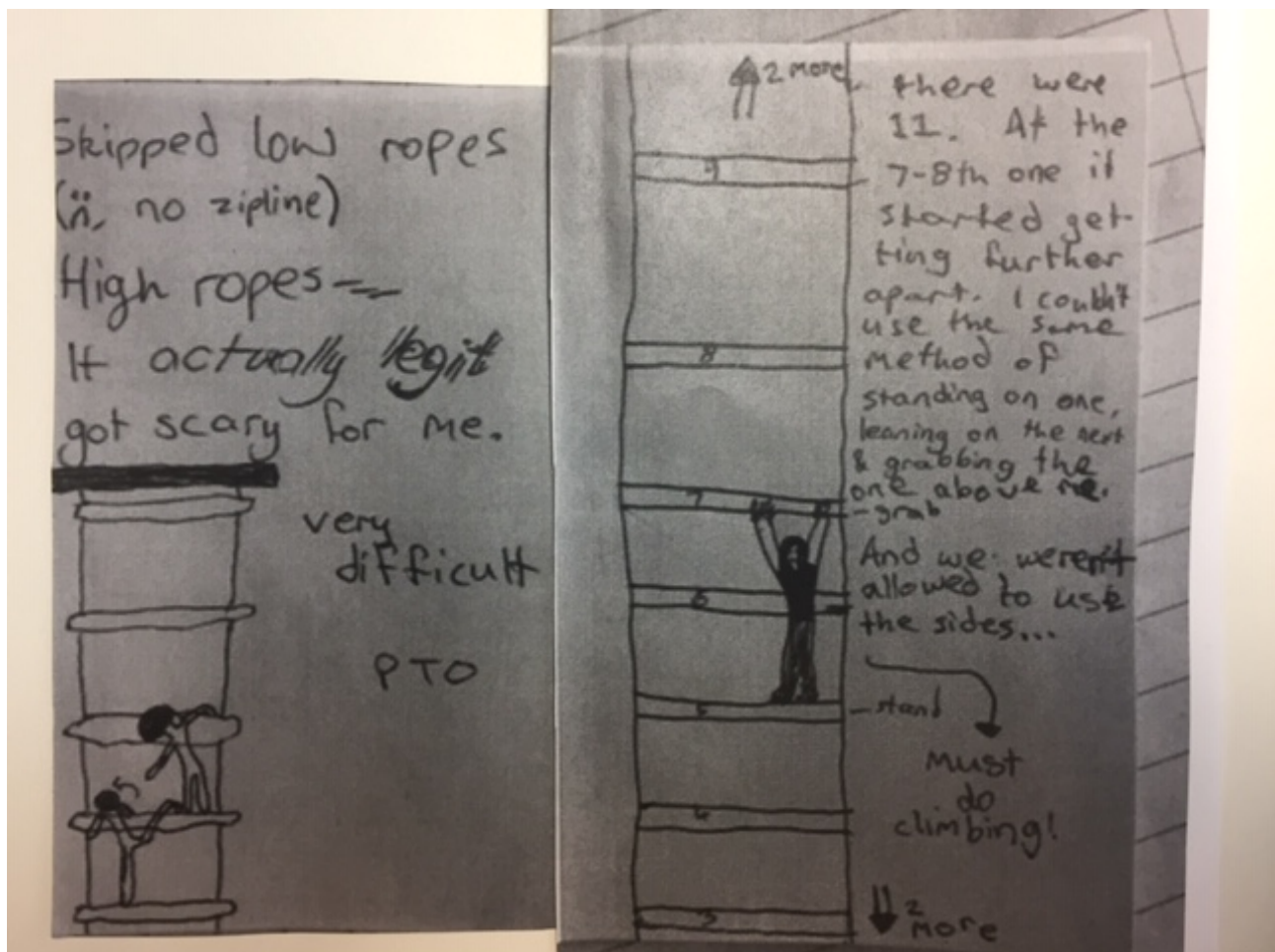
(Camper 1) I was nervous about nearly everything because I can't make friends very well so I came to this camp thinking, 'I'm not going to walk out with any friends,' and I always had that doubt, but I've got heaps of friends. I've got heaps of friends [she says with a very big smile] ... The challenges, I did struggle with some of them, especially the first two days. I wasn't my best, but I just kept pushing through it. But the physical activities, it challenges you. It's outside your comfort zone and you've just got to learn that, "I came here for this." I came here knowing that it's all going to be different. I came here knowing that I'm going to be doing stuff that I'm not very into at home and you've just got to learn to adapt it and continue on and push on because everyone is counting on you and you're counting on yourself to get through.

(Camper 3) I was nervous [BA]. I was nervous to put the breathing thing on because I'd never had anything like that but it was kind of cool once you had it on. I can't say I loved it. I felt a bit uncomfortable just with being through it. It was just odd but not ... I'd just never breathed through a tank thing and had something stuck to my face and I guess I'd never had to rely on another oxygen source, but I felt pretty professional and cool, so it was good in the outcome.

(Camper 4) ... on the high ropes. All the physical stuff, I was like - I wasn't as nervous because I knew there was a lot of firefighters around so we were going to be fine, but I just - yeah. I was still nervous to try it because I hadn't done it before so I was going into the unknown but I love training things and, in the end, it was really worth it. It was good.

(Camper 5) I think for me, I've just enjoyed absolutely everything. When I was arriving, I was really eager to come, but then as we pulled in - just because I didn't really know what I was getting myself into because I just didn't want to really think about it. I arrived and saw the other girls and I thought, 'They're all a little bit younger than me,' and I didn't really know how it was going to go and I was like, "It could go completely downhill," but I think everyone here is really mature, so we all get along.

(Camper 8) I guess it was today as well that I felt like I couldn't lift it and I couldn't really, but I got help, and we were actually able to work together to pop it, so it was great.



Journal entry 5, Optimal challenge

(Camper 10) I just feel that if you're doing something – this is the complete opposite, but if you're doing something you enjoy that even you can find thrills in that thing you've done before. If you're doing something comfortable, even if it's not out of your comfort zone, there's more ways to improve upon that and that's even thrilling on its own.

(Camper 11) I guess when we were in the shipping containers, I'm not really scared of the darkness but it was scary for once for me, and that first one I got in, I was just pretending I was really brave but inside I was really scared. So I was just telling myself there's other people here, I'm not alone so I can get through it with them if I just push through. I felt like I'd pushed myself into that – out of my comfort zone, and so after a good five minutes of just self-talking myself through it I felt really good and I guess I kind of overcome that fear because I'd go back in in a heartbeat.

(Camper 13) Yeah. When we were going into a new activity and I was a little bit nervous like the high ropes I saw it and I was like, that's a really long way up, and then when I was just about to climb it I told myself to calm down, you can do this, you can face your fears and I smashed it out of the park and got all the way to the top.

(Camper 20) I had a lot of fun on them and people kept flipping their boats, so I had a lot of fun climbing up on them [inaudible] 00:12:29 and then we having to jump off them and heave them over. I was really proud of myself because I thought one person was under it – not you, sorry, I'm just pointing in your direction, I'm sorry – and then I found out there was two people under there and they were holding it so I couldn't flip it. And when I did flip it I was very impressed and that was just very nice because I'm like oh I did it.



Image 8, Overcome fear

- Recommendation: Maintain the right balance between optimal challenge, thrill, risk/danger, novelty, learning, problem solving and teamwork in activities to capture the attention of campers

IMPACT

The campers were also asked to identify the kinds of things that they thought they might walk away with because of their involvement in the camp. This was wide and varied ranging from technical knowledge through the courage and future life/job skills. As this data plays a significant role in this report it has been analysed according to frequently occurring themes each of which are provided below with brief commentary and supporting quotes from the campers. Participant journals and images are also used to support the spoken text as well as highlight the impact.

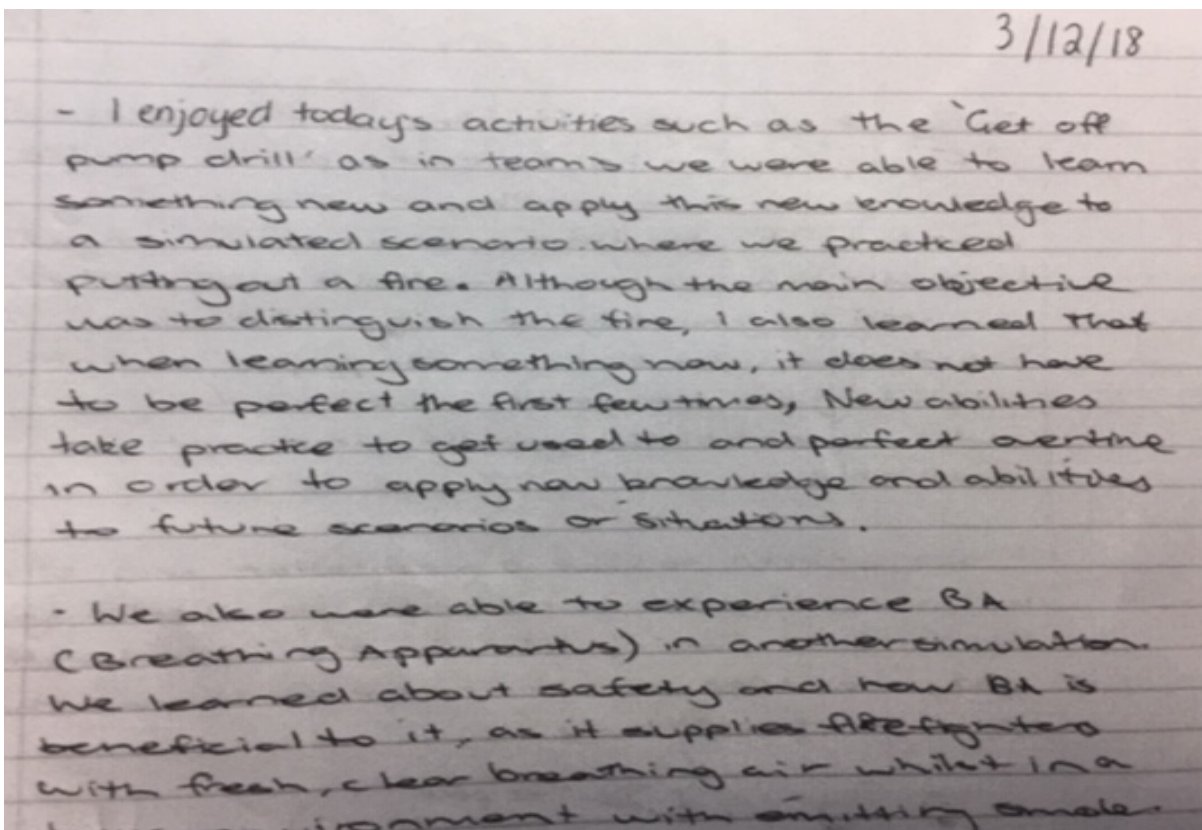
Q: what are you going to walk away with?

Theme: Technical knowledge/information

The FES camp provided many educational opportunities, that is the campers learnt many things and also had a chance to practically apply this knowledge in safe yet increasingly challenging contexts. The application of learnings was observed over time where knowledge or skills learnt one day informed the next and the next day. This was at times quite taxing as many campers report information overload with little space to think or digest key concepts.



Image 9, Technical skills and problem solving



Journal entry 6, Technical learning

(Camper 1) I like the car crash today in rescue, because you got to get your hands on and get to actually know what machine to use and how to use it and the different tools you could use if you're in an emergency situation and how you can actually help people, especially if it's a real one. You can socialise and talk to other emergency services and work as a big community and team to get - make sure that the casualties are all safe and you can get them out safely and not go, "I want to get to that casualty first and I'm going to rip them out."

(Camper 3) There's been a lot going on. I'm not sure if I'm giving this the right amount of thought because I don't know - I know that the car, ripping apart the car was pretty awesome and it just felt like a huge privilege to go in and use all their really specialist equipment and pick up all that gear and do - we did so much. We honestly did and we didn't just learn, "We use this to do this." We did it ourselves and just a huge look into really out of the way, stuff we never see.

(Camper 4) There's been a lot going on. I'm not sure if I'm giving this the right amount of thought because I don't know - I know that the car, ripping apart the car was pretty awesome and it just felt like a huge privilege to go in and use all their really specialist equipment and pick up all that gear and do - we did so much. We honestly did and we didn't just learn, "We use this to do this." We did it ourselves and just a huge look into really out of the way, stuff we never see.

(Camper 11) Even if you don't end up in the workforce like Camper 13 said before, you end up with so many other skills and memories and experiences. It's just amazing, it's very worth it.

- Recommendation: Engage young women in the technical and knowledge based aspects of FES often, with time to question and synthesise before trying

Theme: Physicality/physical skill development

The GFES was physically hard and this was expected by the campers because it is part of the job. It was also very hot at times – again this was expected. There was little to no complaining even though it was obvious they were sore, tired and drained by the end of each day. It is a credit to each that they fronted up every morning for more and kept their eyes open until at least 10pm. This shows that they each came prepared for the physical demands of both the camp and the job, and saw each as connected.



Image 10, Physicality

(Camper 5) So, I thought that was really - for me, it made me feel a lot more comfortable because especially the fire and rescue gear. I reckon that was the hottest and heaviest. It was quite bulky but when we first did the - when we walked through the smoke-filled room I thought, 'I want to opt out,' because it was so hot. I was like, "I might have to take it off because I'm getting really hot," but then I sat down in the shade and I was fine. But I just thought that it was good that the leaders made sure that we were comfortable and we knew that we could take it off.

(Camper 6) Yeah, like when you look at something like the car today and you think I could never lift that thing and pop that door out, and then you have a go and you do it, that's that thrill, that's like I can actually accomplish this if I try. If you don't try you're not going to know.

(Camper 7) I feel like I really liked that with all my training there was a job where I could then go out and by physical and be out on the field and using strength and stuff like that. It felt good to not just train to compete and it felt good to put that into something that I love to do and use my body. It was just a really cool experience to know that there's something out there like that for me to do and it doesn't just have to be a research job or something like that.

(Camper 13) It was really heavy at first but then when you held it for a bit it got lighter for me, and as I was twisting it to make it close in it pulled me forward a little bit so that just the pressure from the tool pulling you forward is really powerful I thought that I wouldn't be able to do it but I gave it a go and I succeeded. ... just to squish a little part of the car, and I only twisted the tiniest little bit and it was already crunching as soon as I twisted it, and how it made me feel? It made me feel powerful, like I could do anything. If some tiny little tool can do this imagine what I can do if I put my mind to it.



Image 11, 'It made me feel powerful, like I could do anything'

(Camper 11) I'm adding onto yours, I reckon pushing yourself through, making sure that you're actually giving it a go before you're like okay, no I've tried my best and that's all. Trying your best, that's all you've got to ask of yourself. That's what I believe in.

(Camper 15) I guess you just know your limits, you learn what you're able to physically do and emotionally do. Like going up the high ropes I knew that physically – well I could go all the way to the top but mentally I could just couldn't go past a certain point.

(Camper 16) I just loved using all the tools like normally any other place you wouldn't be able to use the tools unless you were in the emergency service. And I – just the whole – because they do that all the time, so you got to do all of that kind of stuff ... I thought it was pretty powerful. This big, big jaws to break open a car

- Recommendation: Maintain physical intensity of activities in order to reinforce the physical demands of the job, future testing requirements and closeness to FES on the job work

Theme: Mental and emotional skill development

The campers were able to articulate the mental and emotional gains they felt they walked away with. This is important because the camp was designed with specific 'softer', though FES essential skills embedded. In addition to confidence around each other, the gear and the job requirements they were also able to clearly articulate the mental and emotional skills required for a variety of FES related work. This is important given the changing nature of the work of FES and consequential need for a workforce that is emotionally intelligent.



Image 12, 'I'm walking away with a lot of confidence'

(Camper 1) I'm walking away with a lot of confidence knowing that I can do what I want if I put my mind to it and no one can really stop me unless it's illegal but I'm walking away with a lot of friendships, teamwork, leadership skills and confidence. And just knowing that if I come across anything, I can probably help in a scenario with any of us who was here and knowing I can, in a way, use it all in everyday life, if possible.

(Camper 3) Yeah, I think just doing lots of the different physical stuff, emotionally I was telling someone, "Just keep going, you can do it." But yeah, it feels like sometimes challenging but it's more physical. Emotionally it felt really good if you did it after but just getting your head around - walking in the smoke-filled room you're just like okay it's hard, it's just a room full of smoke. You can do it. You know what I mean?

(Camper 5) I think that I've learnt that it's not - well, obviously you have to be fit for this kind of - for the emergency services, but it really is just about your mentality and if you don't have the right mindset, then it's not going to work for you. So, I think this camp really helped all of us learn how to improve our mentality and stay positive.

(Camper 3) I just think it's all together [mind-body]. Physically, if you're being physically challenged on an obstacle or high rope or something, in your head, you're talking to yourself, right. You're going, "Hey you can do this. Just push up," or like, "This is too much. I can't do it anymore. You did it." Yeah, I think it just all connects.

(Camper 1) When I do stuff, I normally don't think about it. It normally just happens and I don't really self-talk. It's just I know what I've got to do and I just do it. But sometimes it can be a bit stressful because you don't want to stuff anything up because they sometimes explain it to you multiple times and you go, "If I stuff this up, it will look bad," and everyone else can do it really good and you go, "I need to do this properly otherwise it will be so embarrassing."

(Camper 4) Mostly just confidence. If we're doing something and then everyone watches, it's like when we do one thing at a time, you're like, "Everyone's watching me," so you have an expectation on yourself and yeah, you've just got to give yourself the confidence and tell yourself you can do it.

(Camper 7) I found it very overwhelming. Sometimes if I get too much information I find it hard to have a clear task. If I have something to focus on like my goal then usually I'll be able to - I feel like I have a sense of direction so I'm not going to freak out which is a good start, and then I'll be able to figure out the steps I need to take, so if I have clear instructions then I'll do it. So sometimes getting overloaded with information was just too much and at the start I didn't even know if I was going to do the right thing.

(Camper 6) My mind felt just a bit drained by the early days because it's not trained to wake up early, I'm not used to that personally. The physical activities side, it was hard to keep your eyes open sometimes. It sounds bad but it really was unless you were actually into it, like the physical activity parts and your body felt more awake. And throughout the day it does get more awake and there's those times where you're just starting to cool down again and then

(Camper 9) I feel my mind worked well. I'm a pretty full-on person so I'm always doing things, and doing things out there it was like - I don't know.

(Camper 13) Challenging going in there first [cave maze], because I didn't know what was going to be in there at first, I didn't know what my challenges were and just going in and facing them face to face was scary at first, but then having Camper 11 as a leader and having her tell everyone that it's okay, we can do this together as a team just calmed my body down and we did it and we did it in a good amount of time.

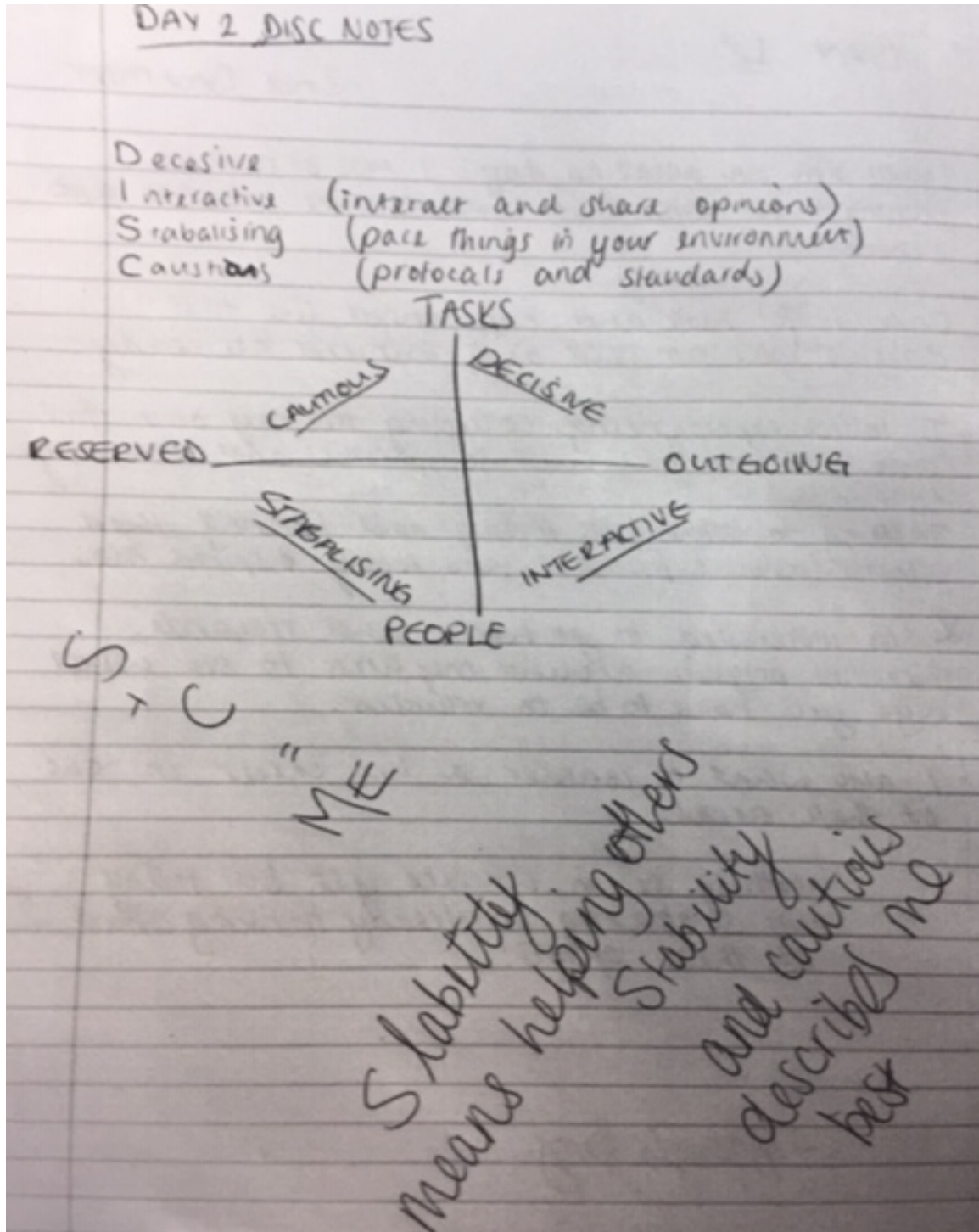


Image 13, Someone always has your back

(Camper 15) I guess you just know your limits, you learn what you're able to physically do and emotionally do. Like going up the high ropes I knew that physically – well I could go all the way to the top but mentally I could just couldn't go past a certain point.

(Camper 18) Ability to believe in yourself to do these things.

(Camper 19) I think we learned about our strengths and our weaknesses. Maybe in these situations because you don't have these experiences in your daily life.



Journal entry 7, Self-awareness, communication and leadership (DISC)

- Recommendation: Continue to develop interpersonal and personal skills that relate to the FES as well as providing strategies and practice for developing other everyday emotional and mental skills

Theme: Sociality, teamwork and leadership skill development

The responses from the campers indicate that sociality and especially friendship development was a key walk away from the camp. This means that very tight bonds were formed based upon difference and diverse skillsets coming together in complex and challenging team oriented situations. This is an important outcome because this is what the FES is made of – notions of family, having your back, working as one dominate FES workplace discourses suggesting that team cohesion, mutual respect, an ethics of care and respect for both leadership and followership were developed at the camp, and are priority skills for diversifying the FES workforce as well as building a workforce capable of representing the communities they serve.

(Camper 2) How to work in a team, and how easy it is to work together with people that you've just met.

(Camper 6) Friendships.



Image 14, Teamwork on the Nepean

(Camper 9) Yeah I enjoyed it [cave maze]. I think we worked really well as a team, and you had to have a lot of trust in one another to help you guide through. So you'd trust the person in front of you to tell you that there's a prone there, to be to this side or whatever. So definitely a lot of trust. Yeah, I did find when we did stop I did start to self-doubt a little bit, but definitely when we kept moving those thoughts weren't in there because you were so focused on a point and trying to help each other.

(Camper 13) Yeah. When I came here I was a little nervous, like scared that I was going to do something wrong or not succeed in something, but everything I've tried, even if I didn't succeed at first I always gave it a second go and always got it. I didn't give up until I got it. The skills that I'm hoping to go away with are friendship, knowing that friends around me will keep me out of danger, and just having fun.

(Camper 14) My highlight was meeting new people. Not even just the girls but surrounding myself with powerful women; you have to be strong to do this. Not even just physically but your mindset. It's just amazing to actually meet people like that.

(Camper 15) That there are different personalities within a large group of girls and that you won't always get along with everyone, but as long as you're not nasty to someone and you're still working together you can put your differences aside and still get the job done.

(Camper 16) I reckon friendships, lots of links towards the different emergency services.

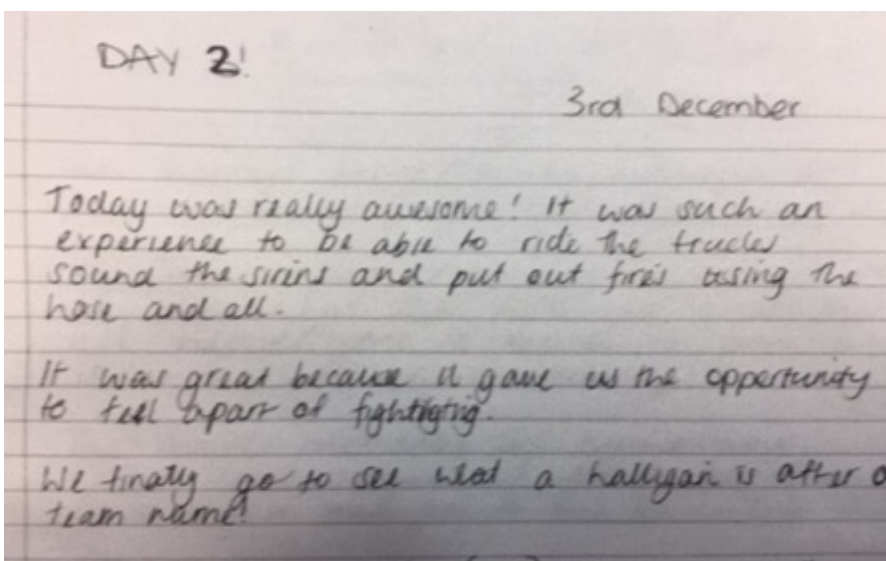


Image 15, Teamwork, communication and raft building

- Recommendation: Maintain intense focus on developing teamwork, communication, leadership, and followship skills that build confidence, trust and respect

Theme: FES identity development (including career option and recruitment)

The camp did more than develop knowledge, interpersonal and personal skills – it also built a picture of a FES workforce as well as FES identity. The campers interacted with three agencies and dozens of their personnel; they watched and learnt, listened and observed and in the process came to know what the job might be like. This in and of itself is a significant outcome as many young women have non-traditional career options foreclosed to them simply because they are women. This camp showed them to job and made it real, and hence tangible as a future career prospect. The camp created a safe and supportive space for the campers to explore and embody the complex work of multiple FES, ask specific questions, hear real life stories, and receive a picture of this profession in 5 days and in a non-threatening environment. This could not happen in their everyday lives, and hence it seems logical to draw the conclusion that the camp has future recruitment potential for no other reason than their eyes, hearts and minds have been opened to the reality of a FES career without any of the social or cultural restrictions placed on young women.



Journal entry 8, An opportunity to be a fire fighter

(Camper 1) Yeah, if I - I'd probably, if I could, volunteer for all of them, because it's hard. I had to have more time to think about which one because SES you get to deal with the boat and search rescues and can help when people are on their down days, like you do with all of them. Fire and rescue, you can - I don't know. Fire and rescue and rural fire services are really similar so you can help when people are in danger or go and help them ... But I don't know. I think I could volunteer for all of them.

(Camper 2) I also like the fire and rescue help when we opened the car up - It's heavy but you don't really think about it too much ... You're just focusing on what you're doing. I mean, in a real-life situation, you would be caring how heavy the stuff is. You'll just want to get that person out.

(Camper 3) But the taster is making us want to join so badly, really.



Image 15, Fire-fighter identity

(Camper 4) Before this camp, I didn't think I'd ever have done all this stuff to do with firefighting and stuff because I just never really thought about it. I thought of careers and that, but it never really stuck with me as much. But when I found out about this, I was like, "Oh yeah, that'd be great helping people," and plus I don't want to be stuck in an office all my life. So, I want to be out doing something that helps and gives back to the community.

(Camper 5) ... but I think everyone here is really mature, so we all get along. It just made it so much more enjoyable because I've been on other camps where the girls just don't get it. They don't really take it - I take this quite seriously, because I really want to join fire and rescue, but I think because all the other girls have the same sort of passion, then it worked really well.

(Camper 7) But I can still be learning new things and having a career out of it where I want to use my body and push myself ... If I can use my body for other things then it just really felt good.

(Camper 8) Also that but I'm walking away with knowing what agency I want to be in or what each of them are about. Like I said before I found SES the best for me personally and now I know that's what I feel comfortable in and that's what I'm confident in rather than - but we were able to see if we were confident in the other agencies and what type of stuff we liked personally.

(Camper 9) Leadership skills and things that I can take home and show my dad or my brigade. Coming here we're learning different skills from different people. I'm learning things that people with 10 years experience might not even know. So I can take the opportunity to take those things and share them with people.

Q: What other skills do fire fighters need?

(Camper 7) They need to be mentally strong. They have to balance their mental and physical strength.

(Camper 9) They need communication skills because they go out and do community engagements and stuff, which we learnt a lot of this week.

(Camper 8) Adding onto that we've learnt how to manage our different states, mental and physical, and I feel like that's really important.

(Camper 7) To always have each other's backs and to trust one another.

(Camper 6) Trust is a big one. We've only known each other for less than a week but I'd trust Camper 7 and anyone here with my life.

(Camper 11) Motivated. I just feel like since they're putting in all this effort to help me to be able to walk away with such an awesome experience and all the help they're giving me I just feel so motivated and I'm willing to put in the effort now to actually go and get involved and help the community just like these women are.

(Camper 12) I think actually getting to wear the uniforms and doing the breathing apparatus. Yeah, I think just getting the full gear on, getting to actually feel like a fire fighter.



Image 16, 'Getting to actually feel like a fire fighter'

(Camper 14) Yeah, so it's just kind of eye-opening because from the outside looking in really whenever I just saw a fire truck I was just looking at people who put out fires, I never really thought about all the preparation it takes to go into that. I didn't even think about the SES or the RFS or the Fire and Rescue. So it's just really good to be knowledgeable about that. Now that I think about it there are so many people that don't understand and it's barely even been a week and we've learnt so much.

(Camper 15) There weren't really any low points. I think the high points was the whole camp, but just experiencing what real fire fighters experience every day in their life like I said before, that was just a great experience. Coming into the camp I didn't really know what I was getting myself into and I wasn't really interested in it either, but I am now so –

(Camper 16) Yeah, I've always been into emergency services, so I just wanted to come see what it was all about, get more experience, learn the scenarios, different tools.

(Camper 17) Yeah, I can see myself at the very least volunteering for either the RFS or SES.

(Camper 20) Probably more knowledge about which emergency service I'd like to go into ... I was already thinking about maybe volunteering for fire fighting and then this got pointed out and I'm like oh brilliant, I can figure out if I actually want to do it or not.



DAY 1!

2nd December

Today was an amazing day! I was so nervous coming to this camp that I wasn't sure what to get expect.

Once I got here and experienced the first day I was amazed and inspired all ready!

I loved experiencing, collecting all my own fire gear! to me that was so special and amazing!

Talking to some girls today and hearing their stories and experiences has really inspired me.

X I'm interested to go home and research the fire brigade around my area to see what age you have to be to volunteer.

I also want to consider a life career in one of these areas!

Nothing set in concrete yet but today was so amazing I'm already thinking about all these options!

Journal entry 9, Recruitment potential (engaged from the start)



Image 17, *The gear makes this a reality*

- Recommendation: Maintain continual reference to 'on the job' skills and the role of FES in society

Theme: Future life impact

Recruitment imperatives aside, the camp had such a significant impact on every camper that it could not fail to drift into their everyday lives. Certainly, all of the themes previously mentioned are also useful in their worlds beyond camp e.g. at school, in families, at part time work, with partners or friends, and simply in a general sense in any part of their lives now or in the future that require confidence in one's capabilities. Not only were they able to articulate what they learnt about the FES, but also what they learnt about each other, themselves and what this new sense of self belief (perhaps empowerment) meant and could mean in their lives. The impact of this camp could be measured by the following quotes alone – the camp helps to mould more resilient, confidence, courageous and capable young women, and as the first comment implies one's also with a great deal of character. Ironically, many would also remark these to be essential aspect of FES identities.

Q: when might you use some of the skills that you've learnt here in other parts of your life?

(Camper 1) How to crack open a car.

(Camper 1) Probably communication and leadership skills. Leadership skills you can take in and you can in a way help lead people through the safest route possible when you're doing something, so they don't go wandering off ... But and it's also helped - I don't know. When you're captain something and you can - everyone's trusting you and you've got trust in them and they trust you and you lead them up the same path ... So, communication skills, what to say and what not to say, how to comfort people, people explaining things in a different way because everyone learns in different terminology and stuff.

(Camper 3) I think leadership, just for future careers. Even if we don't go down that path or firefighting, it can be used anywhere, in school activities, in sports, in just the workplace, yeah.

(Camper 4) I think I used just the concept and the experiences of all the debriefs we did, but not only the ones with you but after the SES activities. I think that's just a really healthy thing in every situation in life. If anything goes wrong and you feel like you need to improve something in your own behaviour or in relations with other people, or just in an activity you mightn't be repeating - and it doesn't have to be, "Let's do a debrief." You can just bring it up with a friend or people you know and just facilitate that conversation.

(Camper 5) I think I learnt a lot of patience. When we had one of the debriefs with you the other night, I heard Camper 7 say that she - she said something about being patient with other people and I usually am quite patient with people, but there were stages where I was like, "Oh, come on." But I just shut my mouth and didn't complain or anything. So, I think that that's improved.

(Camper 6) Not even being in the emergency services but if something happens at home you're able to protect your family and you know what to do.

(Camper 7) Yeah I agree with that. They always talk about how they've done a lot more training but their training just kicks in in those situations. So you feel probably a bit calmer than other people may because you've experienced the scenarios and stuff like that.

(Camper 6) It's like we've always had an idea of what to do, but they just really pinpoint it down and let us have scenarios and things where we practice if we're in that situation.

(Camper 12) Every day.

(Camper 13) New jobs.

(Camper 14) Yeah in the workplace.

(Camper 11) Leadership and just teamwork.

(Camper 14) Yeah if you're working with others teamwork definitely.

(Camper 11) And being able to take positive feedback and not think it's criticism. I think that's a big one.

(Camper 13) Yeah ... Yeah, friendship, teamship when we're doing something together.

(Camper 14) I feel like respect and resilience, confidence.



Image 18, Multiple skills developed for modern society

(Camper 9) I think I'm taking home, I don't know, the skills and stuff. Life skills that could last for a long time and the skills that we've learnt here will help me decide some things in the future so whether SES or fire rescue. I don't know, sort of like giving us an opportunity to try everything and see whether we like it or not ... I'm wanting to help out with my community and stuff and know how to protect myself, my family and people surrounding.

(Camper 10) Learning how to take care of my mental state ... Going to the HSC ... At work. When everything starts to get too much just go up and speak to whoever I feel comfortable speaking to about it.

(Camper 11) I think that I'll be walking away with life skills because not only have we learnt all the fire fighting and emergency service skills, but we've also learnt how to work as a team with each other, how to do basic bush skills and stuff like that. Even learning how to put the trailer on the bus, which is really good I think.

(Camper 12) ... it is a fire camp but it also incorporated so many other basic skills. We had talks about fitness and health and how to keep your – what was it, the money, savings ... Yeah, and then just basic everyday things, PPE if you're going to work in the sheds and stuff. So all that knowledge, and just meeting new people as well.

(Camper 15) Just like the people that like it's their everyday job, and you go into it not knowing what you want to do, and then you go out knowing that these people do this every day and you're like wow.

(Camper 20) Well I suppose it's like the unexpected things that happen. You don't – you can't predict what's going to happen, you don't know everything that's going to happen. You can prepare for everything, but you're guaranteed to not expect anything that can happen. And then when you least expect it and least prepared usually the things happens.

- Recommendation: Provide time to create links between skills, attitudes and knowledge developed in camp with their world outside – make links regularly

Theme: Biggest learnings

(Camper 2) I'm stronger than I think and that I can do a lot of things.



Image 19, I'm stronger than I am

(Camper 11) That it's okay to not do things. You don't have to force yourself to do everything. If you've stepped out your comfort zone and you think you're pushing it too much it's okay to say no. you don't have to keep doing everything to please others. It's important to please yourself and make sure yourself and your wellbeing like physically, emotionally and mentally that you're stable.

(Camper 14) It's okay not to succeed.

(Camper 11) I learnt that it's okay to be a volunteer. You don't have to be paid to do these types of jobs, it's okay to volunteer and not be paid for it. You're still helping so many people out there and so many people are so thankful and grateful for these opportunities. So more people should get involved even if you're not getting paid.

(Camper 12) I learnt more about emergency services and what they actually do and actually doing their jobs. Like rolling the hoses and stuff, you'll always take that with you from now on.

(Camper 13) I think everything, learning more skills, learning life skills and having the opportunity to do this while I'm still young. If I was older and something came up like this I probably wouldn't do it, but since I'm so young and I've still got my life ahead of me, this camp has – I don't know if it has yet but it might have just pushed me over the boundary of making the emergency services my go-to for life.

(Camper 14) Well like I said before when you're outside looking in it's just people putting out fire with water, but if you think about it it's not, it's so much preparation, so much brains, so many people doing so many different jobs. It's not just people working the hoses and cleaning the pumps and checking all the gear before everyone leaves on call, but it's just amazing how even volunteers who don't have to be paid go out and risk their lives.

(Camper 15) Getting to know, the insight into emergency services people and their everyday job and what they do. Just knowing the background of everything and the involvement of everyone coming together and becoming – just helping the SES and stuff like that. Just coming together and giving their time, it just influences other people to give their time and volunteer just because they enjoy it.

(Camper 18) I'm fitter than I thought.

(Camper 19) I'm stronger. I'm stronger than I thought I was.

- Recommendation: Provide positive reinforcement and instructional feedback at every opportunity in order to promote learning
- Recommendation: Provide time and space for campers to reflect upon their lessons and learning and pose questions for deeper understanding

Theme: Lingering impact

The key to determining the long-term impact and therefore recruitment potential of this GFES model will be the longitudinal collection of data from campers with regards to FES volunteering and/or career choice. To begin this process and to determine the lingering impact of the camp post camp phone interviews were conducted with six (n=6) campers, and email responses to questions were shared from another two (n=2). This is quite a good response rate and speaks the ongoing effect of the camp on participants and the ways in which it continues to linger in their minds and bodies, as well as continue to support the many others things they walked away with more immediately. Of the eight (n=8) campers spoken to after the camp four were already involved in FES activities, one became a new RFS member, one will join SES at 16 years of age and another after year 12, and one had taken no action. This highlights the importance of follow up as well as providing enrolment steps during the camp. Two important stories emerged in the follow up conversations. 1) the camper who had no previous interest or affiliation and who joined RFS within 2 weeks of camp end; and, 2) the camper who came to camp labelled as 'autistic' and went home and changed her friendship group, started answering questions in class, joined a trampolining club, took up singing, became more assertive, and remains determined to join the SES. The latter of these stories is mentioned because disability, and associated ableism is also an essential diversity factor for FES to navigate.

Sample phone interview post camp data

Q: What's your biggest learning? How have you stepped up?

Increased confidence in myself, more optimistic, happier, smiling.

Been helping more ... taking some initiative ... doing without thinking ... helping others ... confidence to step up

Thinking on my feet ... talking to new people ... increased confidence ... controlling my time

People skills ... doing something I've never done before ... it was exciting, challenging, new and different

Q: Did anyone notice a change in you? Make comments?

My Mum would say 'why are you smiling?'

You're crazy ... it was a foreign concept to my friends

I'm making everyone more aware ... wrote an article for the school newsletter, met the mayor and the commissioner ...

Q: What's the thing that still lingers for you about the camp? Best memories

Amazing ... 'I can do anything' ... When I doubt I can do something, I step back and say 'I did it at camp'

I can do things better ... having a go ... knowing I can do better ... knowing I can do it ... I'll be able to do the HSC – do well ... there's always another option

I remember the things that challenged me ... I can do anything that I want ...

The friendships

It's always in the back of my mind

Sample written post camp data

At camp I became more confident in stepping up and creating relationships with new people. It has helped me to be more confident, especially in leadership roles and working as a team and trusting others.

Hearing all of the motivational speakers really has made me strongly consider a career in emergency services. It sounds like such a challenging and yet an exciting career that has a strong sense of teamwork and respect within all areas of the job.

- Recommendation: Conduct longitudinal research into the ongoing impact of the camp, most especially in relation to recruitment to FES

Theme: Stories, the job and role modelling (the impact of the leaders)

From a research distance it appeared at times as if many of the leaders were over protective, coddling, over bearing, controlling, interjecting on space and time, and 'mothering' the campers. From an organisational perspective this was not the role of the leaders. Instead they were to be more hands off, to nudge and coax, provide space to explore and to let the campers create their own experience (that said this was not made clear in leader roles and was assumed). Flying in the face of fieldwork observations are the many comments below confirming the importance of the leaders and their essential role in future camps. The leaders, and mostly these ones did something very special with and for these young women and it had a very powerful effect upon them, and one likely to remain for a lifetime. This also means that young women have been lead by strong women, and that strong women are needed in all areas of civic, social and professional life. Whilst the leader roles need to be more tightly defined, this pilot has shown strong support for this model of camper-leader interaction.

(Camper 3) There was just one other thing. I liked how we had all the women come and do this but I still like how they brought men in to do it because having both, I think it's still good. I like how they had all the women leaders because that made us feel more comfortable, definitely, but I wouldn't mind either way. It doesn't matter. But I liked how they still brought in both genders.

(Camper 1) And I like how they all got involved and they were all having such fun going, 'This is this idea,' and I think - I can't remember who, but one of the leaders was telling us that they were so happy. They want to come back for next year and they want to come back and socialise again.

(Camper 4) And that made us feel really good, I think.

(Camper 7) I like how the mentors acted like mums towards us, that was good.

(Camper 6) They were just so caring. They just devoted so much to us this week because they just wanted us to have a good time and be a good experience and they want us to find something that we're passionate about.

(Camper 8) It's like if you share that care with us we can share it with others kind of thing, like we spread the caring.

(Camper 9) They give to us and we give so much more back because of what they've given us.

(Camper 10) They constantly tell us how proud of us that they are, which is a good feeling to have someone say that who's been in the service for a lot longer.

(Camper 7) And they've given us leadership skills by us watching them, which is important in life.



Image 20, Leading by example

(Camper 3) I think there was a huge amount of equality and even though they were teaching us and we knew they were there in the background to just be more experienced people just to help us out if anything went wrong, they were just really comfortable talking to us just like normal other adults ... Also, I like that they sat with us for lunch and dinner and stuff, because that's the moment where we get to learn their stories.

(Camper 1) Yeah, they'd socialise with you and not be like what teachers do at school. They sit -

(Camper 3) They sit on their own table.

(Camper 1) They join in and they socialise and make conversation and get to you know a lot better and your strengths and weaknesses.

(Camper 3) I also noticed that if you could hear one of them having a conversation with another adult, it was the same way and tone that they'd speak to us. So, there wasn't a barrier there like we're the children, they're the adults. They were really - it was all equal and yeah.

(Camper 4) I would say just keep pulling in all these people with amazing stories because that's what came across. They were just like, "I have this person. I've got to give him some time to talk to us," and tell their story.

(Camper 4) I reckon the leaders here have been really empowering and I love seeing all the fit women and all the strong women. It's great. And PT in the morning has been really educative. Just seeing all the women and all the older women as well doing all of this working out. And I think that's the only thing I've ever thought that I probably couldn't do as well as males, is just being strong and just being able to move things around, like what Leader 6 was saying. She can chuck stuff across the room, so I'm like, "Oh, well, okay."

(Camper 7) I just like having the leaders. The leaders that we have, they're such great role models as women and how amazing they were to just learn from them.



Image 21, Strong women across multiple agencies

(Camper 10) I'll add onto the mentors thing. Their way of mentoring was really – I don't know, just good and we can take the ways of their mentoring to use in the future of how we could mentor others and how we could teach them similar stuff to what they taught us, stuff like that.

(Camper 11) I think for me the best experience was having the leaders be as engaged and as involved in the activities as we were. So not only are we walking away with all these experiences but personally I don't think I'd be walking out this wanting to join if it wasn't for them because they had the drive and they answered all my questions and they were introducing me to people and contacts for me to talk to and they're giving me numbers to help me actually get into this. They're not just chucking you into the deep end and off to camp, like don't really care –

(Camper 18) Having the stories. You just question about and they pop off a story about something that happened to them and how they deal with it and what they could have done better ... I had a bit of freedom actually ... Yeah, and they let us experiment with pretty much everything. I mean when we did those tunnels and stuff we're like wear whatever PC you want. It was PP isn't it? I'm terrible acronyms.

- Recommendation: Continue to include motivated leaders who offer a variety of life, FES and career experiences

Theme: Other

Through the use of multiple research methods over the duration of the camp every attempt was made to capture the complex dimensions of the GFES camp experience, thusfar this report has shared the main themes to emerge. Below other, less frequently occurring though certainly important appear below and should be carefully considered in relation to the data shared above. This includes thinking seriously about gender and the ways in which it was presented, explored, expressed, constructed, questioned and resisted in its various forms. It is not within the scope of this report to analyse these kinds of deployments of gender though most certainly gender is a factor which will determine the next steps of both the campers and the leaders involved in this pilot. It is also a key diversity and inclusion factor and along with many other such factors deserves special and critical care as well as scrutiny and attention if/when more young women join the FES workplace. The camp experience will also provide FES and the agencies supporting this project with advocates who will support and pass the word about the camp. This is a significant promotional strategy that deserves further consideration.

Gender

Q: What did you think about all the women in society kind of stuff?

(Camper 3) Yeah, I haven't personally experienced it either but I think this camp has shown - I know - I've always thought and known that women can do anything they want, but even all the heavy stuff, women can do it just as easily and it's really opened my eyes up to it, which - I knew. Women can do everything, but yeah, just seeing it and doing it ourselves, it's really given us something to take away and tell every other person, "You can do whatever you want."

(Camper 5) Yeah, well, I was going to say, I don't know about you guys but what I found is it's generally the adults who are more the ones that think that women can't do it, whereas it's younger women who think they can do anything. And then, when I was in school - it wasn't that long ago. I say it like it's ages ago but a majority of the guys in my year saw women as equals and thought that we could all do the same thing. There were a couple here and there who would maybe say a few sexist remarks but you just pulled them up on it and say, "Hey, that's not right." But I do tend to see quite a lot of discrimination towards women with adults and they're usually the ones who think that women can't do the same thing that men can do.

(Camper 4) Is that men or women adults?

(Camper 5) Oh, both. Generally, men are the ones who voice it, through my experience, but then if you ask an adult, she'll go, "No, women can't do that."

(Camper 1) Yeah, and girls are role models for children as well, so when there's children around, whatever the adults do, the kids will go, "Oh, that's the right way to do it," and they'll follow you down that path and not go down the correct one saying, "It's more about equality and everyone can do whatever they want." So, if the adults show that, "Girls can't do this," or, "Ladies can't do that," it's putting a bad example towards younger kids and knowing that they're our next generation, going to make the world a better place or changing the world, it's not putting a really good mark against that generation.

(Camper 4) I think that sort of stuff [women's experiences and women in society] you brush it off and it all sounds really cliché as it's being said, but it actually really - way back there, subconsciously, after a lot of those messages, it does sink in, even though you don't realise it. And even though it sounds really cliché, growing up with that message makes a huge difference.



Image 22, Having female role models makes a difference to young women

(Camper 8) I feel like girls feel like they might get judged if they try too hard on something and that's what stops them from trying.

(Camper 9) Sometimes if they don't have the right mindset or right encouragement it might stop them from pushing themselves and making them want to actually do it.

(Camper 11) No, I think it's really good [role of women in society]. At the end of the day everyone has a different opinion, but it was there and in some cases it's still there. Men have so much more power and they were offered so much more, but camps like this is how it's going to change. The way that Bronnie's put a camp like this together for young women to help them get into the workforce, the statistics show that young girls and women in workforces are much lower than men. So I think the idea of having just girls here and not boys really helps because it gives us the power to be able to do something in life. Not even just here but in general we know now that women can do just as much as men, and that we're all pretty much equal at the end of the day.

(Camper 13) Yeah, and what Camper 11 said, women have been put down for all these years and now we're actually getting the chance to rise up and show the world what we've got. Most of the girls are sitting back, let's just let the men do this, but we've always got girls like us who want to get out there, help the community as best we possibly can, and show these men that we are not scared to do anything. We will go into houses and we will rescue people no matter what.

(Camper 11) And I think once people start doing that everyone starts following. So the leader starts doing it, everyone else will start doing it. So within society a bunch of us can start showing everyone that women can do just as much as men, then everyone will start getting involved I think. It's going to be a parade, everyone will start following eventually.



Image 23, Young women leading the parade

- Recommendation: Continue to reinforce that gender norms influence the ways in which women experience society and also their workplaces

Advocates

Empowering young women to confidently enter the workplace and society was a key aim of this project, with one of the big ideas being that the pilot campers would lead the way, open the door and sell the message to other young women. In interviews the campers were asked the following question,

Q: What would you tell another young person who might be interested in this kind of thing?

(Camper 2) Do it.

(Camper 4) Yeah, exactly. I'd be like, "Sign up. Do it. You won't regret it."

(Camper 1) Do you like helping people? If so, this is the place for you.

(Camper 3) I don't think you need to tell them too much. There's so many different areas in this that suits everyone, so many different - like as they said, all of the career choices. There's so many different ones and it's all for different people; communication, being out in front of the fires and that. I would just say, "Sign up and think about it later. Just get in."

(Camper 1) Show them the schedule. "This is what you get to do. This does this. This does this."

(Camper 4) I'd try and convince them to join a volunteer organisation because there's not much opportunity to do this camp and it's in another year, so I would just go home and yell at my friends and go, "Join the SES or RFS," ... And I know that Fire and Rescue's not volunteering but you can join RFS and SES as juniors and you can do all the training and be ready. So, I'll just tell them what I've learnt and try and move that on, considering they haven't had this experience. Just try and teach them what I know as best I can



Image 24, SES juniors waiting for cave maze rescue

(Camper 10) We will have memories that we'll be able to tell our children, and if this program still runs we can give them the opportunity to do it.

(Camper 7) That's also another thing, I'd love to be a leader, just helping.

(Camper 7) To just go for it. Give it your all. It's a new experience which [inaudible] 0:35:33 I wasn't going to come, it was short notice and I just thought this could be a really bad time and I could just be frightened the whole time, but reminding people it's good to have a new experience, and from personal experience you're going to really enjoy it.

(Camper 9) That they can do anything they want. So even if they give it a go and they don't like it or they don't think it's for them at least they're going to try, find the next thing, try it, keep going.

(Camper 6) It's a life changer. I'd explain how much it changes – I'm walking away with so many new friends and so many new skills and those sort of things. Just reassuring them that it's not just you go in there and you're learning about the emergency services, you're doing that with a whole lot of other things on top of it.

Apply –

Go for gold -

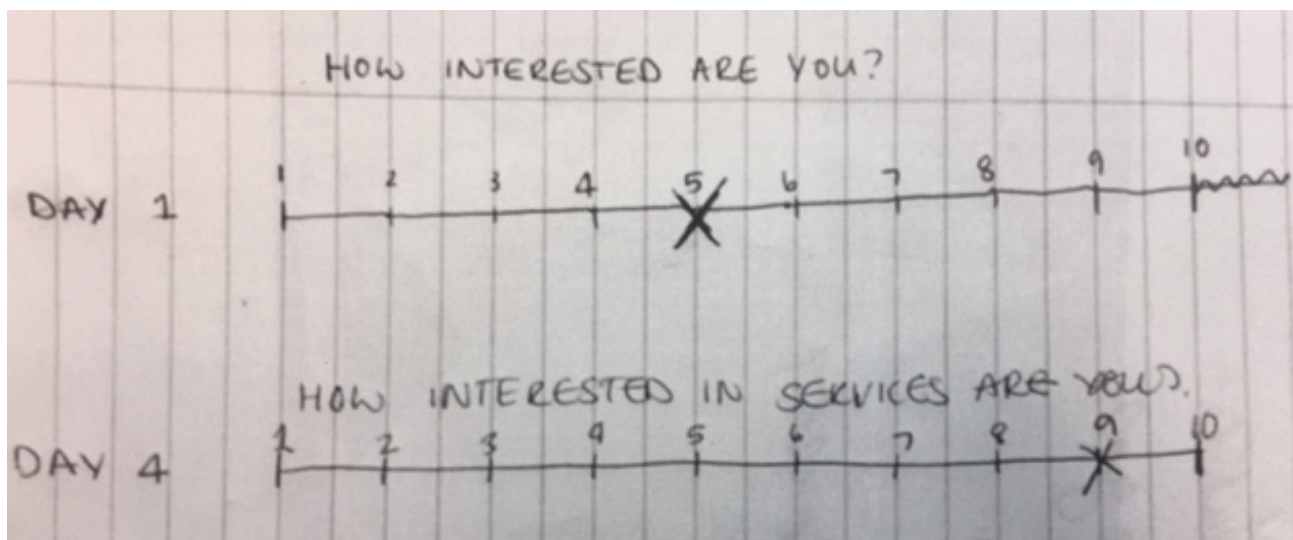
Go for it –

Definitely.

It's amazing.

So worth it.

It is.



Journal entry 10, Recruitment potential (increasing interest over duration of the camp)

- Recommendation: Consider the future role of past campers as promoters and advocates of GFES camps as well as the FES.
- Recommendation: Engage past campers in future camps as junior leaders/squad leaders as a further recruitment as well as mentoring strategy

CONCLUSION

The GFES model appears to have had both short and mid-term observable and enduring impact on the campers in multiple ways. Most significantly in relation to confidence and courage, sociality, pushing themselves, and developing a specific kind of FES aligned identity. Evidence suggests that during the GFES each camper experienced an array of novel, challenging and rewarding activities that changed the ways in which they work with others, view themselves and think about their capabilities. Importantly, this impact remains up to 4 months after the camp with powerful results evidence in family, friendship, school and self. This lingering impact some time after the camp is significant in that it suggests the GFES model has the distinct capacity to not only attract young women to FES in a variety of ways, but also has a deep enduring impact upon who these young women are and might become in the future. This powerful and enduring impact, whilst difficult to measure now or in the future has the potential to change the fabric of the society in which we all live, including the ways in which women are positioned in regards to their skills, knowledge and capabilities to be active and productive members of FES in Australia.

SECTION 3 THEMES AND FINDINGS FROM THE LEADER DATA

(Leader 8) I think I knew that we weren't coming here purely to recruit fire fighters, I knew that wasn't the purpose of it. The purpose of it was to build more resilient young women, who potentially would hold the characteristics, if one day they wanted to apply, then cool, they'd be great, they'd have that leg up.

(Camper 3): DEFINITELY keep the team leaders the way they were – passionate, knowledgeable women, in the job, very experienced, and most of all, inspiring



Image 25, Treating young women like adults, inspiring them and developing strong bonds

INTRODUCTION

The leaders selected to be involved in the GFES pilot played an important role in the camp structure. They acted as advisers, organisers, storytellers, activity facilitators, confidantes, time-keepers, gate-keepers, friends, parents and ultimately role-models. There is little doubt that female role models, mentors and critical friends have the potential to positively influence other women, and in the case of the GFES camp the leaders had a noticeable impact that even they might not have been aware of.

In this section, we learn about the camp from the leaders via data presented by way of findings around leader diversity with the aim of identifying affordances and opportunities for future inclusion and diversity strategies. This is followed by a substantial amount of research findings which reflect the leaders' experience of the camp, its impact on them, as well as insights around how to improve future iterations. A key aim of this section is to drill the data to identify strategies and ideas that may have the potential to inform FES diversity and inclusion strategies, most especially in relation to workforce retention, leadership and other forms of professional development.

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS WITH A DIVERSITY LENS

Affordances

Gender: The participants in this research were homogenous with regards to gender identity. All participants in all groups identified as female

Geography: A geography lens was applied inasmuch as leaders were recruited from across the state, with strong representation from rural areas.

Age: There was good diversity in terms of age where attempts were made to diversify the leaders selected to reflect age as a diversity lens. This also meant that years on the job and FES workplace experience provided a greater knowledge and skill depth and breadth to the pool of leaders thus enhancing the educative potential of the camp for campers, as well as facilitating learning between the leaders. This however was not always the case with some conflict observed between individuals and across agencies. The inclusion of older leaders should be questioned as whilst it is a diversity lens it is unlikely to have future development or leadership impact on an older leader who attends. In this regard agencies should be mindful of development potential in selection processes.

On the job experience: Years of service, ranged from 2 years to 31 years with total combined years = 135 years, and average = 15 years.

- Recommendation: Continue to recruit across age ranges though re-consider the inclusion of retirees, late career personnel or those not interested in career development
- Recommendation: Continue to recruit with a geography lens in mind

Opportunities

It is a long stretch to claim a diversity lens was applied to the participants in this project as age, experience and geography are the usual factors that play out in FES and sit easily within and across these agencies. That is, people of all ages (and hence experiences) across NSW are already involved in FES, new lens and new strategies are required to attract new people. Consideration must also be given to FES workplace cultural practices that personnel may have blind spots around i.e. casual bias. The following data and suggestions could diversify the FES workforce even more.

Sexuality: The participants in this research were homogenous with regards to sexuality identity. All participants in all groups identified as heterosexual/straight

- Recommendation: Consider targeted recruitment strategies for people of diverse genders, sexes and sexualities

Culture/ethnicity: The participants in this research were homogenous with regards ethnic or cultural origin/identity. Of the twelve (n=12) FES volunteers all but one identified as white/Anglo/Australian (Pacific Islander). This likely reflects the current employed population in FES in Australia, yet it doesn't reflect the diversity of the communities they serve. Some within group social bias (racism, sexism, ableism) was noted on a number of occasions in both public and private forums.

- Recommendation: Consider targeted recruitment strategies for ethnically and culturally diverse participants (campers and leaders) via a variety of culturally specific strategies and organisations
- Recommendation: Conduct research to identify FES personnel social biases and develop targeted training and development

Previous experience: It is interesting to note that eleven (n=11) of the FES volunteers had previous work experience prior to joining FES agencies, this might suggest work/life experience to be a factor to consider with regards to recruitment and retention.

- Recommendation: Consider targeted recruitment of women already in the workforce or who are returning to it

Education: With regards to education level it is worthwhile to note that these FES volunteers have entered into this workforce from a variety educational pathways, two (n=2) secondary schooling only, three (n=3) undergraduate/graduate degree, and seven (n=7) from trade or technical backgrounds. This suggests the leaders are highly educated and/or very technically proficient, thus bringing diverse skills to both this camp and their workplaces.

- Recommendation: Target young people at school in years 8-12 (likely with different strategies), and older young people through TAFE and other technical training institutions, and possibly university settings

Movement/physicality: All of the participants (n=12) in this research reported positive, early and lifelong experiences with movement, including sport, physical education, gym/training, and/or other physical activity. When they were younger the leaders engaged in a wide variety of movement activities which ranged from army cadets, guides and camp kids, to equestrian and motocross, with many individual and team sports in between. They each also remain active now with observable shifts towards individual activities such as gym work and low impact activity (e.g. walking) as well as leisure related activities (e.g. scuba diving, hiking). This data provides recruitment insight insofar as movement plays a significant long-term part in the leaders as well as the campers lives.

- Recommendation: Targeted recruitment practices could occur in team sports settings, likely those traditionally perceived to be non-traditional for females. There also seems to be some benefit in approaching gyms and other leisure related groups/community organisations to attract older/more life experienced women to FES

Lifelong movement: Motivations for women to continue to exercise or engage in physical activity pursuits such as those required in FES work are important to consider with regards to recruitment strategies. A key finding from this data is the impact/outcome of the leaders' long-term association with movement and physical activity. Survey data details such impacts/outcomes:

Self confidence and training skills. First Aid, Navigation and physical camp skills

Importance of teamwork, an enjoyment of outdoor activities, motor skills

Initiative, support from peers/leaders, opportunity to challenge myself, break out of my comfort zones

Achieved coping skills for adverse personal issues, built confidence level, developed a love & appreciation of nature and had a continued ability to network with like people over years

Learnt the value of a joint team effort, and that there was something nice about internal competition to push you to be the best you can

Team work and resilience

Team skills, flexibility, timeliness, strength, fitness, communication

Strength and confidence

It may be possible to use these impacts/outcomes to guide future promotional advertising, FES training programs, and other recruitment strategies. Thus, the targeted recruitment focusses on skills and attributes developed as opposed to over exaggerations of the physicality of FES which undoubtedly deter many women from considering FES as a career/volunteer option. This is an assets or strengths based approach to recruitment which will likely attract more women.

- Recommendation: Design recruitment strategies for women based upon the development of skills and attributes associated with teamwork/sociality, optimal challenge, confidence and strength of character. Avoid an over reliance on exaggerated physical demands
- Recommendation: Design recruitment strategies based upon assets and strengths and that include a variety of cognitive, social, technical and physical challenges

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The data below was collected via pre-camp surveys, in camp interviews and observations, and post camp feedback. Together these form a set of responses to the broad research question:

- Are fire and emergency service camps for young women an effective retention, leadership and professional development strategy for those currently working in the FES workforce? (people who volunteer/teach/leaders)

The following data shares information ranging from the application process to personal and professional impact, camper impact, and suggestions for improving workplace culture and future agency or sector recruitment mechanisms. This is insightful data that should guide future FES diversity and inclusion approaches as well as GFES camps.

The application process

The key to any new program is recruiting the right people for the job and some time was spent by FRNSW to initiate a process across RFS and SES to recruit leaders for the GFES camp. Data confirms the following processes were effective in recruiting leaders:

- Expression of interest (workplace internal processes)
- Word of mouth
- 'Girls on Fire' website
- Conference meetings
- Peer/colleague recommendation
- Knowing the camp director

Motivations to volunteer

By far the most common reasons for volunteering to be a leader were altruistic – 'it's for the young women'. Data identified the following reasons:

- Encourage, empower, support young women

- Build confidence, resiliency and character
- Give young women career exposure
- To role model and mentor young women
- To give back, change a child's life
- To positively influence young women
- Reinforce 'you can do anything'
- Share personal experiences (on job, in life) – lead by example
- Giving a young woman an opportunity they didn't have
- Develop an understanding of young women's experiences today
- To listen, give young women voice
- Change society



Image 26, Experienced educators sharing skills and building capacity

Q: Why did you sign up to be a leader? What were your motivations?

Theme: 'It's for the young women'

(Leader 1) I absolutely love watching and encouraging young women ... to learn and to grow and to try new things and to break through the barriers and the boundaries that they either put on themselves or that other people have put on

(Leader 3) The idea of just being able to – if you can change one thing in a kid's life positively, that's pretty special. And the memories I have from the people who did that for me, that's pretty much why I did it.

(Leader 5) ... the world is your oyster and what doesn't work through one door doesn't mean that there is not another door with another avenue that you just take a different direction to get to where you finally want to go.

(Leader 6) I wanted to be involved in giving young girls, teenage girls exposure to a career I love ... I never got that opportunity when I was younger

(Leader 8) I did it because I have very very very minimal, very few women mentors, female mentors in my role, and I would have loved that opportunity at their age just to cling to someone and go what are they looking for? What do they want? What do they want from someone to be in that role? What are they asking of them?

This is a set of gendered intentions from one woman to another and specifically designed to support the young women to try, learn, grow, improve, and to change. It is based around providing a safe and supportive space to teach skills, mentor, create opportunities and above all build confidence and capacity.

Theme: 'I'm not here to go make a cup of tea'

Another strong theme to emerge was around challenging theirs and other workplaces based upon their own experiences. They wanted it to be different for these young women than it had been/is for them. Data identified the following reasons:

- Shift or challenge the culture
- Change the workplace
- Breakdown workplace stereotypes
- Break through barriers
- Support women entering the workforce

(Leader 4) I've seen some ups and downs of the glades, the districts, the blokeyness, I guess, of the organisation and felt it was a wonderful initiative to try and change in some small way that entrenched culture

(Leader 7) I'd like to see the girls get an opportunity that I never got. I was one of the first females into my volunteer brigade. So I was constantly finding that whole, "girls can't do this".

(Leader 8) ... whilst I'm still learning, I know that I need to learn how others do it, and that's totally fine. It might not be the way I do it, but some men particularly see that as an opportunity to walk over me. I need to learn the balance of sitting in the background observing, but then putting in place that I'm not here to be walked over, I'm certainly not here to be, "go make me a cup of tea".

(Leader 9) That's something I'm struggling with [communication], so still trying to find out the best way to communicate in a male-dominated industry with people that have a preconceived perception of communicating with women in the leadership space

Theme: 'I've been searching for more'

A final theme around motivation to apply/be involved in the camp was for development, whether that be personal, professional, educational or leadership. Data identified the following reasons:

- Share information and skills with others
- Learn from others (skills, organisational, communicating)
- Observe others in leadership positions/roles
- Develop leadership skills
- To be mentored

(Leader 1) I've been searching for some more challenges in my career ... this year has been about now being a leader ... so I'm stretching that learning and I saw 'girls' and 'fire' and just they smashed and the universe opened

(Leader 4) I felt that given my experience in so many positions over time ... I thought it was an opportunity to pass some of that information on ... I felt privileged to be part of that small team

(Leader 8) I've actually gotten out of this more than what the girls have gotten out of it ... a lot of these women, 25, 30 years plus in the job, and they've very much got a handle of where they've been and the issues that they've come across. It's the issues that I've already come across, and how they've dealt with it, is certainly how I've dealt with similar stuff. It's been awesome

(Leader 9) I was very much taking an introverted attitude to the camp to see and take in and mimic appropriate behaviours shown by others that had that experience rather than go out and try and push a style that I wasn't sure whether or not that would be the right place.

- Recommendation: Determine strategies to maintain ongoing support of camp leaders, mentorship and development post camp involvement

Development and take homes

The camp leaders played a significant role in initiating, facilitating and supporting change in the campers, as per their main altruistic motivations and as indicated in the camper data presented in Section 2. This in turn had an impact on them before (motivations), during (actions) and after (reflections) the camp. These changes are a significant and enduring impact to come from their involvement in the camp and reinforce the claim that the GFES camp has leadership, professional development and retention potential for women working in FES. Data identified the following take homes:

- Refresh FES skills (upskill)
- Develop greater confidence
- Take on new challenges
- Improve leadership skills (communication, listening, interpersonal skills)
- Speak up, have voice, be assertive
- Quiet leadership (step back, listen and observe)

Q: What do you want to get out of this? What will you walk away with?

Theme: 'Quiet leadership'

(Leader 1) It's a training ground, it's a practice ground, it's being on the training field with a whole bunch of opportunities to test my skills and to make mistakes and to work in a different environment that I'm not familiar with ... I think the other skill I'm going to take away is that not everybody has to like me and that's really hard for my little girl because she really wants to be liked.

(Leader 3) Walk away with 'I've given back'. I'm a really, really big person and believe in what has been given to me to give back because what you give out, you receive. And I don't care what it does to my career or whether it's positive or negative. I'm quite secure in that. This is about what I get, myself, out of it and if I can see a kid get, at the end of the week, something out of it that I've been a party of, that's all I want.

(Leader 4) I didn't come here for myself – I had no expectations that I would necessarily take anything away. I mean at my age my participation as a fire fighter is probably drawing to a fairly close finale, but I still felt that I had enough knowledge and experience that I could perhaps pass on some of that to benefit others; and if it changes the life – not me – but if this camp changes the life of even half of the participants that we've had here, it's worthwhile. To me that would be the reward.

(Leader 5) I think for me, I thought I could walk away with maybe a better understanding for what it is like for girls in that age bracket in comparison to what it was like for me in that age bracket ... I guess to help them to believe, but to kind of look and go, if they want to talk with me ... let's deal with this a little bit at a time and then overcome that, built some more character, built some more life experience, and went, let's take on the next challenge. And it can be done.

(Leader 6) I am definitely working on my regular body language within smaller groups, that has always been a bit of a blind spot for me. The way I manage teams at the moment, I call a spade a spade and say 'hey look, I have done something to ping you off, I need you to tell me' but I do want to work on the soft skill side. Helping with the organisation, with our activities that we have facilitated, that is always a - you can get asked at any point in time, rock into a station 'hey, can you run a drill? Can you make it practical?' so, having practice with that.

(Leader 7) Just a smile. And just knowing that I've hopefully helped some of these girls make a decision or helped them in some way to steer them the way they want to go. Not the way other people want them to go ... Because we have some young members at home and that young members group is just starting to develop. It would be good for me to go, "Oh, that's right. I've seen this on camp. This is how it was dealt with ... What would I do differently? I don't know. What would I do? I'd probably be a little bit more sympathetic to what they're trying to say, what the girls are trying to say, or understand more of what their feelings are behind what they're saying. As opposed to just going, "Don't say no. You can do this. You've got this." But now I can probably go, "Why are you scared of this? What's stopping you from doing this?" ... [So] listening. Active listening ... [Is that a leadership thing for you?] Yes. It is.

(Leader 8) Step back, step back and let them figure out on their own. I think the biggest, oh I don't want to call it micromanagement, but it probably is to someone else. The second you step back and you step out of the picture, you're still a team leader, you're still leading from the back.

(Leader 9) I think I very much picked up the fact that you should let your skill set talk for itself rather than feeling the need to be involved in every conversation, take over the conversation, always give examples of you, always bring conversations back to you, always try and big note yourself and what you've done ... I think that I learnt that being relaxed in a lot of situations, the whole calmness inspires confidence was a big take away.



Image 27, Developing training skills

Leadership and career development

During the interviews leaders were asked to comment upon the career and/or leadership impact of their involvement in the GFES camp. They were also asked to share any future or subsequent promotion, leadership, education or other development aspirations that they may have. Of the 9 leaders only two claimed that their involvement in the camp was not career related or did not anticipate a career impact. One of these women was retired, the other older but new to the workforce. Data identified the following potential career impacts (arguably these are also development and leadership outcomes):

- Undertake further training or education
- Change job or promotion
- Undertake leadership training and courses
- Take on more/greater responsibility
- Request additional responsibilities in workplace
- Promote the GFES idea
- Initiate new programs in workplace
- Having challenging conversations

Q: Do you think the GFES will have an impact on your career?

Theme: 'Work smarter, not harder'

(Leader 1) I want to continue working in my DiSC profile, that really resonates with me, to understand my personality and the way that I interact with people. I want to continue growing my ability not to clash into a situation but to move 'seamlessly' into a situation ... Ability to listen ... building on my skills of how to hear what people are not saying and watching for body language and verbal cues and physical body-language cues.

(Leader 3) I've never worked around a lot of females and I work in a male-dominated industry so learning to negotiate strong opinions and lots of talking, lots of talking. I'm in a very 'doing' job so I just - when something needs to be done, I'm like, "Let's do it now, do it now, do it," and I've had to step back in patience and whatnot. I'm very much a person that if I see something, I want to say something immediately and I can't do that here ... One of my skills learning, and that's what I've actually told my girls – "This is what I have to learn this week and that was part of my thing". This will help me to be less abrasive.

(Leader 5) I think it will. I've actually applied for a position in the office of women up in parliament house, so I've actually put in for a position there ... what I learned out of this experience is - the first one is that you actually don't have to be the loudest voice to be heard, but there's something to be said about being a quiet achiever and being a loud voice, I should be utilising that to push that person forward to help them be heard. Work in the background and support and enable them to actually become that louder voice that is heard. The second thing that I have learned is that there's a lot to be said for humility and that you actually don't have to brag about all the stuff that you do to actually demonstrate your ability. Just by doing, your actions actually speak louder than the words that you utter, and that it's paramount to let your actions and your words exactly mirror. Don't say and then your actions are the opposite, because you know what? You're not authentic, you're not genuine, and people will pick up on that. So, they're the three things for me.



Image 28, When I was at this camp I lead from behind

(Leader 6) I achieved the rank of leading fire fighter in April, and it is a role where I can act up as a station officer, but I am also a fire fighter. I haven't had the chance to act up as much as I would like, recently, and it is just for me, consolidating my skills, as running incidents and things like that. So, for me, my career focus at the moment is, for the next few years, I just want to get as much as experience acting up and working with different crews as possible ... If I sat down to a promotional panel tomorrow and they said 'well we see you did the Girls on Fire camp, why did you do that, instead of going to be a recruit trainer?' and I can speak with passion, saying 'it is something that I am passionate about, I am wanting to give back, I am wanting to inspire the next generation to join the best job in the world' whereas someone who is just gone 'oh I did a six month training secondment because I thought it would be good on my resume'.

(Leader 7) Yes. I think next year I'm going to apply for the next level up in my job and try and go for that next level promotion ... If they say, "Describe a situation where you've had to take a step back but still foster something or encourage something." I can go, "When I was at this camp we worked with five girls and we did this. I'd call it lead from behind so that they take the charge and they make the decisions and then we just be there to catch them if they've made a wrong decision or whatever."

(Leader 8) I'm doing it [further education] because I know I'll need it in the future, I have aspirations to eventually get to a managing position, or eventually be in a coordinators position. I want to put myself in the best advantage for a position like that. It fascinates me, so study what I'm interested in, emergency decision-making and emergency management, it's very relevant. I can use what I'm learning now, so it's not just a matter of it'll do me in the long run, it's helping me now ... Yeah, 10 years I'd like to see myself in a 2IC position, an operational role, operational manager, a little bit beyond that, because that would only put me in my early 30s.

(Leader 9) I did learn a lot of things by sitting back and watching the people that were very confident with that [leadership] skill set ... I also took away that everyone should be included and just because you have doubts whether or not someone has done something or can do something doesn't mean that you shouldn't give them a go and it doesn't mean that if you are very confident with your skill set, yeah, you can go away and do it in 10 minutes that you couldn't spend an extra five with someone new trying to learn that skill to help them to understand it and to get them involved as well, that inclusivity. I think that's a big take away for me how important that is.

Survey data in response to the question 'Do you think the camps might be able to prepare you for promotion or leadership positions? Please explain' provides further support for this strategy.

Updating facilitation and conflict resolutions skills is always beneficial for those in leadership positions

Too late in life for me, but certainly it should afford such opportunities for younger participants.

More than likely

Hopefully! I am interested now in challenging my comfort zones! I have been in the same job description for a long time and it is time to rattle the cage and try something different. I am very passionate about sharing skills and growing groups for better outcomes.

I am not interested in promotion due to my age and life goals, I am interested in leadership for young people and yes this camp will look good on my resume.

Not in the sense of promotion more about improving on my leadership and mentoring skills

Not really

Absolutely! I am extremely keen to make the move from volunteer to career within the Emergency Services sector. I have moved into a Leadership position within my current volunteer role with NSW RFS (as a Crew Leader), but still have ALOT to learn! This will be a fantastic opportunity to put my knowledge into practice in a supported and semi-controlled (ie: not at an incident) environment. Very excited to see how effective I can be!

Yes, team leadership experience

- Recommendation: Provide specific advice and support before, during and after the camp about ways in which to develop leadership skills. This could be by way of workshops and/or other training provided to the leaders who volunteer i.e. incentivise involvement and make this a specific training opportunity

Post camp leader follow up

Around 3 months after the camp leaders were contacted and asked to share any personal, career, leadership or development shifts since their participation in the camp and upon returning to their workplaces. Five (n=5) responses were received. Post camp data identified the following lingering impact of the camp on their ways of operating in their workplaces:

The memories of camp invigorate me and remind me of a time where I made a huge impact ... The bonds that were formed. The true friendships I know now. I'm excited for the future.

Yes, in that I was truly 'blown away' by the plethora of female leadership and talent on display and the amazing impact it had on the campers who truly benefitted by their attendance - visibly blossoming and growing day by day. I continue to promote/espouse the opportunities such a camp afforded the participants and the future of the emergency services involved - all of whom must surely evolve and change to take better advantage of the skills etc. of their previously overlooked staff/membership.

Yes! I learnt a lot about other women (team leaders) and how they tick. As a tomboy type person I have never (over 57 years) tried to set up friendships or associations with other women unless they are a bit like me. I get frustrated with dramas. Being so close together I needed to understand the issues and be a part of them to a degree. I have always had a lot of empathy, patience and time for people but I never take it home. I have built a large respect for some of the other team leaders that I would not have first thought.

YES, yes and yes! I honestly never took too much notice on how much influence I had on young people when I take time in their interests and just talk with them. I have developed an even greater passion for helping young people and I get so much satisfaction when they approach me. Example, I met a year 12 student in the hairdresser yesterday, we got chatting and she shared with me that she was unsure whether to complete a gap year with the military or as a civilian and work a normal job. I shared some insight with her about my experience with military recruitment and

the benefits it would produce for her, I gave her some ideas about avenues to answer more of her questions. By the end of conversation she had lodged her application to undergo the gap year training. If more people took the time to share, listen and assist young people we will have a generation who can make informed and educated decisions.

A key anticipated impact of this model on leaders is the focus on developing the workforce and building leadership capacity. In addition to the data provided in interviews the following post camp data identified career impacts:

Q: Have you taken on or been allocated any leadership roles since the camp?

I was deployed as a Logistics Officer to Glen Innes last week and to Tasmania as part of a Liaison Team (in January 2019) managing co-ordination of all NSW deployed firefighters and Incident Management personnel.

I have not formally taken any leadership training however I do recognise more frequently that I am in a position informally that I can use the same skills. I.e. during my Victorian Deployment last week as the night Logistics Officer, I had a young 20 year old woman who had never deployed or travelled before. She was very nervous and really had no idea what to expect. By the end of the week we had a great relationship and she was performing so well! She had already requested to be placed on the next deployment roster!

I haven't been allocated any leadership roles as such but my workload has changed slightly for the better, not only am I being trusted to provide advice and support to my manager on a range of different things that have occurred since returning home. I am also now taking on jobs/roles my 2IC would have been trusted to do

No, not specifically. However, I have probably become even more outspoken and pro-active in advancing the cause of female leadership.

Q) Have you applied for any leadership roles? Or promotions, secondments or the like? Do you intend to within the next 3-6 months?

I have been invited to be on a "Project Team" for improving Logistics and Finance systems across our organisation. I feel very valued about this request. I plan on applying for a secondment into Head Office if there is a position that relates to Logistics/Finance management or Girls Fire Camps, Youth development.

I will be applying for a promotion in the next 3 months, I have also re enrolled into Uni to complete my final year of my Masters. Since the camp I feel I have gone the other way. I feel inclined to spend more time in the role I am in and ensure that I have developed all that I can from my current location before moving too quickly. Expanding my network has shown that employers take life skills as equally as high as skillset. I am happy to stay put and just experience a little more.

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- Recommendation: Conduct longitudinal research to measure the ongoing impact of the camp in terms of development, further education, leadership, career promotion and personal skill development
- Recommendation: Provide equity programs for FES women who wish to advance their careers e.g. mentoring, development and training

Workplace culture

The leaders described workplace culture as a barrier to women joining the FES workforce. This is important to mention because regardless of the skills and attributes developed during a camp/program such as this, if the conditions upon return to work are not conducive for ongoing development and support, including leadership opportunities then any impact, either personal or professional is negated. The data revealed insights into workplace conditions that could be viewed as barriers as well as those that could act as enablers. Data identified the following workplace barriers:

- Social isolation/exclusion, testing and exclusionary practices
- Women start from a deficit position (capabilities doubted)
- Needing others to 'vouch for' 'promote' 'put forward'
- Workplace culture
- Having to work harder and be better than men
- Lack of women in leadership positions

Theme: 'Never slip below 110%'

(Leader 1) In my fire industry, I am a lot more suppressed and I'm a lot more – I don't have the confidence because I feel that I have been suppressed down or pushed out of the way or don't have a voice. I don't feel like I have a voice in my industry because I don't feel I have the rank and the structure.

(Leader 2) ... all these women have gone through what I've gone through. They've come from different areas where they've struggled with men and one of the things when I first started was, "Well, you know what," – and I think I heard it somewhere else, and I'd been saying it for years. In order to be equal we women need to be better. And it's a terrible thing that you have to say but it's the only way that you get past that barrier.

(Leader 3) I'm not at a very supportive station at all. I have some older fireys that aren't actually interested in either me or my career path.

(Leader 4) I know there's many many barriers - and not just from my experience – but from other women as well. It is and has been blokey business and fair enough, it started with the guys out on the farm using branches and wet bags and so it became an organisation that was essentially men, but as women have joined, unfortunately they've been designated the catering, the communications. Not that I'm denigrating those roles, because they're absolutely vital to being out there on the fire ground, all of those support roles. But it shouldn't be that because of your gender you are cast in a particular model, or mode; and that's what I strongly believe in women's equality.

(Leader 5) I think it's a balance and I think it's a balance between, yes, having to push that little bit harder a) to demonstrate - because looking at the cultural environment, especially the Australian cultural environment, it's put your money where your mouth is. It's like, you've got to push, you've got to push, you've got to push.

(Leader 6) But, as a female in the job, personally I can't be the fastest, I can't be the strongest, so my take has always been to know my shit inside out and back to front. And guys that I have worked with, people I have had give me feedback and saying 'oh yeah, I talked to those guys about you and they say you know your stuff, you have got your stuff in a row and you know it back to front and that's a good thing. I have never let myself slip, or I try not to let myself slip below that 110% because unfortunately, society - a guy coasting along at 75% effort, he's one of the boys, it's all good but if I tried to coast along at 75%, not everyone but those one or two little snipers would start whispering and taking and I try not to feed the trolls but for me, it is easier to be on top of my game, than it is to coast and try and deal with dreamers

(Leader 7) Be yourself. Don't ever give up and don't take no for an answer. That's my general way. As in if you're really certain about that, don't ever give up and don't take no for an answer. Because I was told I wouldn't be able to drive the trucks and I wouldn't be able to wear breathing apparatus and I wouldn't be able to do this and I've done all of that.

(Leader 8) It's quite hard, because a lot of the time the men who are quite derogative, when I have one on one conversations, it's like oh no but you're okay, you're fine, you're great. How do I get defensive at someone who is on face value being perfectly polite to me, but I know they talk so poorly about other women? When they're potentially my future manager, they're my future supervisor, they're the person supporting me for my promotions. When they're with the boys or when they're relaxed, their true values come out and they're slandering them. There is no consistency.

(Leader 9) I do firmly believe that unfortunately it is also a cultural change, need to understand that in this industry, my dad's generation, the generation before that have grown up with the fact that men are the workers, they are the providers, and that was just the way it was. The core industries were run by males because they were stronger and dominant and direct and were able to do these tasks. It is a very big cultural shift and mindset shift for them to be accepting of the fact that that is now changed. So as the generations change and you get younger generations who are fully accustomed to working with females in roles every day that this whole his and her thing will slowly play out itself with time.

- Recommendation: Conduct research to benchmark subtle and unconscious cultural practices in the FES workplace via the identification of social bias rates and subsequent training to ensure a safe workplace for all members of the FES community

Theme: 'Male champions'

A significant enabler for women in FES is the support of a male colleague, usually one in a leadership position. The women who felt most valued and supported in their workplaces, or able to progress their career had a male champion. Only 3 of the leaders had such a colleague. This could also be considered a barrier especially if a person/individual was out of favour with such a person. It would appear that some form of across agency leadership development might be useful to ensure all employees are supported by a leader capable of promoting all personnel as opposed to 'one-off' champions. Data identified the following workplace enablers:

- Senior male supporter to 'vouch' for capabilities
- Support of a senior female mentor
- Knowing who the key supporters/decision makers are (to support progress)

(Leader 1) I feel like I need the right people to know that I'm the right person for this job ... I believe you have to have the right male champion or the right female champion in a leadership structure to listen to what you've got to say.

(Leader 2) It is good. Very, very good, yes [to have a champion]. That support is very good in such a male dominated place.

(Leader 9) I've got 42 qualifications in the sector, doesn't count for shit. It's all about who you know and it's all about kissing butt in some regards. It's very difficult. It's not easy for females to get in.

- Recommendation: Ensure all managers in FES abide by anti-discrimination policies, treat personnel equally, and have strong communication skills



Image 29, Male champions take brave steps

Impact on campers

It was clear that the leaders had a great deal of anticipation around their involvement in the GFES camp, their possible roles and responsibilities, as well as what they stood to gain for themselves by volunteering. Whilst reticent to think about the camp being about them at all, it was obvious that the needs and interests of the campers were their primary focus.

They each had no doubt that the camp had impacted upon every one of the campers, and over the course of the week observed many changes and developments amongst the campers that were unseen to other observers. Most especially their close engagement with one small group of 5 campers meant that they saw many things behind the scenes, and were able to pay close attention to the ways in which their team developed over time. As such their comments are very valuable in relation to determining the impact of the camp on the young women who attended, some of whom found it difficult to articulate their experiences. It is for this reason that their feedback in this respect should be highly valued by readers of this report. Data identified the following impacts on the campers:

- Development of technical skills (knowledge)
- On the job readiness
- Life skill development
- Push past fears, courage and resiliency
- Teamwork and collaboration skills
- Breaking stereotypes, breaking free
- Inclusivity and acceptance of difference

- Transferable skills
- Reinforce career aspirations
- Leadership development
- Confidence, self-belief, and self-awareness



Image 30, Young women breaking stereotypes

Q: What do you think the campers got out of this? What will they walk away with?

Theme: '15 year olds came in, 18 year olds going out'

(Leader 1) An understanding of their own abilities, smashing incorrect perceptions – 'I didn't think that girls could bowl a hose' or 'I didn't think that I could do this' – and understanding of teamwork and understanding of resilience ... I'm not sure that I've seen – I think I've seen a shift in a couple of the girls who have certainly opened up and said, "Wow. This is great. I didn't know. This is awesome". The nervousness on their first day, it's really hard also to detect. Because we throw them into this environment where everything's new – the food, the accommodation, the people that they're staying with, the leaders that they've got and this new fire camp and the activities like breathing apparatus– if they were in a familiar situation where they knew all the leaders and they knew all of the other campers and the A-truck was the only thing they'd never done, would we see a different behaviour?

(Leader 2) They're going to walk away with a lot of those values that we talked about. I can scope, I've basically concentrated on my five but I've seen other things from the other 15. But some of them are walking away with some different skillsets. Some have really pushed themselves really hard past their fears but had to stop up because they got too far. But they've pushed harder and harder. And some have just shone and taken it with, they've just grabbed it and run with the ball. And they've just shone out there and been able to keep on running. And they're going to keep on running ... They're all going to go home and know that they have some resilience, that they can do, because they're going to know that they can do what they want to do. They're not going to be pushed back. They're going to walk away and know that when they come across something that they're afraid of they can push through it. And they're going to go away with one of the major things, is the teamwork and knowing how to do teamwork, how to be supportive ... One of our major ones in our team was inclusive ... Leadership

(Leader 3) I seriously think you've gotten 15-year-olds and I think you'll leave with 18-year-olds ... Well, it's not a play camp. They've been to school camps where it's a play camp or it's a school camp for relaxation and fun. This has got a purpose. So, they're learning managed things, they're learning adult stuff. And stepping up. They really are.

(Leader 4) You could see them day by day gaining in confidence, in experience, in knowledge, and it's a pleasure to watch them beaming before your eyes and the confidence that you feel 'this is the next generation - with people like this, we can't go wrong' ... it's a life skill and a self-belief that will stand them in good stead whatever field they choose to follow ... but it's essentially about women having voice. Because in our society women have been suppressed – they've not been told 'you can go out and do everything, anything, whatever you choose to do'. They've been guided into certain careers – I now those barriers are breaking down, but they're breaking down slowly, so slowly, and I think even empowering 20 young women who can go out there and challenge those perceived ideas of what a woman's place is. It's got to be beneficial for everyone.

(Leader 5) I think for me an increased understanding of their self-worth and actually how much capability that they have that they actually underestimate. I'm sure in their brain they go, I know I can do this, but they actually underestimate the capacity to which they can do. They'll have that little try and they'll have a little go, but there's so much more that would back that up if they can take it to the next step and go, actually, you know what? This is a bit of a follow-on from this. So, for me it's walking away going, I actually can achieve, and I actually can achieve better than I give myself credit for ... I think maybe an understanding of the importance of team, and understanding that there are lots of cogs that make up a team, and every cog needs to have little differences to fill in the gaps ... This opens the door, and if it means that you got 80% of these girls go in to learn organisational skills and the ability to cope in crappy situations and develop and understanding for the need for control and risk assessment and planning, and they only stayed in the services for three, four, five years but walked away with a whole heap of those other skills, it's transferrable to anywhere.



Image 31, Ready for the job

(Leader 6) I think a lot of them are going to find inner strength that they didn't realise that they had and they are going to develop their toolbox of resilience that, when they come across something that is troubling them, they are going to have reference points to look back and go 'hang on, I did that, I can unpack it, I can push through it, I know it is going to be uncomfortable', because they have chosen the challenge to push themselves by being here, by being hot and sweaty, by doing high ropes and having that reference point of 'I was uncomfortable, I was scared but I did it anyway' is one of those skills that you can't teach, you can't sit someone in the classroom and teach that and say 'oh yeah, you will be able to just push through'. It is giving them those experiences that I think is the most valuable thing that they are going to take away and it translates to 'I am having difficulty at school, I know I can ask someone for help, I have got friends I can lean on for support or I know I can ask a supportive adult' through to 'what's the worst that can happen? I might not make it but it is going to open up other doors, it is going to open up a lot of other opportunities'.

Which, so many people get trapped in fear, 'I can't leave that job because I won't have money' and money is not everything but try a new skill, 'I have to go to uni' no, try something else. I think some of them are realising that you might be strong in short, sharp boosts but it is a marathon, not a sprint.

(Leader 7) I've noticed change, where they've gone from that shy young girl who didn't want to eat anything, because people might scrutinise what she's eating, to a girl now that can make a decision and go, "Yes I'm going to have three bowls of cereal for breakfast." And then they stand up and go, "No it's okay for me to stop and tie my shoelace up or something, if I want to. I don't have to conform to the norm", so to speak ... I've noticed that with my team, yes. They gelled really well as a team to start. But now they're actually building on each other's skills and going, "Oh this person is having trouble with this". Will automatically just go and help. And it's not just in my team now. I just noticed on the high ropes yesterday that a couple of my team were actually helping girls from the other areas that were struggling and encouraging. And it was nice to see them actually start to get the confidence to go and approach others and offer help ... They're facing their fears ... I think they'll walk away with a lot of small life skills that they can build on ... They'll know now that they can give it a go. A bit of encouragement, that they're encouraging themselves a lot of the time ... they're out of their comfort zones. They're out of their comfort zone. They're doing these things, but they're expanding their comfort zone at the same time.

(Leader 8) I think they're learning the more core values, rather than technical skill, we're exposing them by giving them a taste of what it's like, to ramp them up and be like yeah this is cool. But under the covers of the PPC that they're wearing, they're learning how to work with different people. They're sleeping in confined spaces and quarters with girls they've never met before, so straight away, their negotiation skills with teamwork compromise and their own self confidence, in their own challenges, and challenged by choice. If they're going to get the most out of this, then they need to put their hand up and show themselves that perhaps sitting back and watching, isn't going to get themselves out there. I think that's what they're going to take most away from this ... Self awareness ... self talk.

(Leader 9) I want to say respect. There was a lot of respect with the Fire Rescue side. There was inclusivity. There was really good dynamics ... Everyone was involved. Everyone was treated with respect ... So I think that they walked away knowing that these were respectful, inclusive and somewhat family dynamic organisations where you worked as a team to obtain a common goal. That was definitely something that they walked away with feeling that these teams were somewhat family-like, that you help each other, support each other, learn with each other, grow with each other and get the outcomes ... Definitely the teamwork. I think respect was something that they did see ... I think they did learn a lot about forming relationships and the importance of teamwork and communication after hearing about some of the conversations that went on with the girls in their cabins. I also think they may have walked away – well, they definitely walked away with new friendships with each other – but that the pocket of friends you have now is not the only people that you'll ever get along with. They formed relationships very quickly and they were talking about all sorts of things that they really got a different perspective by creating those relationships with people that they probably wouldn't have outside of that situation. I also think they probably walked away with seeing that you don't need to live with a mobile phone in your hand.

- Recommendation: Maintain the leader roles in order to gather important insider data on the camper experiences

GFES camp as a recruitment strategy

Leaders and activity facilitators were asked if they considered the GFES to be a viable recruitment strategy, all 12 replied yes, with some clarifications as below provided. This is likely a reliable piece of information as none of these 12 women have been to a camp like this and yet found themselves at one. As women considering, entering and being involved in the FES workplace they are qualified to both comment on impact as well as future recruitment potential. They have also had the previous life experiences of being a young women precluded from such activities.

Q: Do you think this GFES model has recruitment potential?

Theme: 'Endless potential'

(Leader 1) Absolute, absolutely. It's a work experience. It's an awesome opportunity for them to get to see the inside, so when they go to a fire station and do a week of Year 10 work experience, they are not going to feel like they – They're going to have skills. They're going to know how to bowl a hose. They're going to know what the back end of a truck looks like. They're going to know what a fire feels like. They're going to know what the gear feels like. So that's not knew, now it's just getting on with the job or getting to know the people.

(Leader 2) For sure. Yes. I think it's wonderful camp ... I think it's just wonderful because it gets women out of that box. What are you going to do when you grow up? I'm going to be a nurse. I'm going to be – it gets you out of that box. You don't have to be in that box.

(Leader 4) From what the girls are saying, I believe so. Various ones are cadets, so they will pursue that, but others are saying 'oh yes, well I'd like to join this'. Some of them have already got focused on a career with fire and rescue, or going into the RFS.

(Leader 5) I think there's endless potential for it, and there's a good potential for this kind of - like, for the emergency services recruitment, but I also think there's a further potential of girls especially considering the fact that, you know what - the assumptions are that this is an all-male environment, but there's a whole heap of other male environments out there. The potential is endless. Yep, I want to be an engineer, I want to be a pilot. I'm good at maths. I want to do this. Great. Yeah, might be a male because that's just how it's worked. Hell, give it a crack.

(Leader 7) I think so. I do. Because it shows them that it's not such a male dominated industry. I know it's not so much of a male dominated industry anymore, but that's because I'm in it. But if I'm from the outside looking in, I don't think you would see it as clearly. So for these girls to get a peek of it, would be enough for them to think. So I think so.

It was generally agreed that time would tell how effective the GFES model is as a recruitment strategy, and that patience, commitment and promotion over 5-10 years will have a workforce impact.

(Leader 3) I think very long-term, very long-term ... I think the girls that are coming out of this, I'm not sure that this camp will change anything because I think the girls who come to this camp were going to do it anyway. But this will get out how good it was and this is really your advertising for it. I firmly believe that the girls who have come here, they're all going to succeed, regardless, because they're the first people and they've really invested themselves. But there's 10 million girls who haven't even heard about this camp who, when they hear about it and then they're like, "Okay, well, maybe that's an opportunity," long-term I think that's where you're going to get people thinking about the job.

(Leader 6) I think it is a really valuable tool ... I think if you kept this going for the next 10 years, if you could ramp it up to a camp every six months, preferably spring and autumn, for weather, if we kept it at 20 over 10 years, 400 campers.



Image 32, Leaders leading the way and by example

Survey data in response to the question 'Do you think the camps seem like a good RECRUITMENT strategy? Why? Why not?' provides further support for this model.

Gives good, positive exposure to girls in an age range where they are starting to think about careers. A camp environment allows for physical and mental challenges to be overcome with positive role models/mentor interaction

Hard to say at this stage, but certainly worth a try. Only time will tell - and the research!

Not sure yet

Yes because it allows young people to make "informed choice" and an opportunity to "try before you buy". One of our participants have determined that they want to join the fire brigade but know they are terrified of heights. This is a safe environment to try all things relating to

emergency services at an early age and get an understanding of all the different aspects and learn about the support and camaraderie that exists to support and build great teams. They have time on their side to make informed choice without the pressures of having to "get a job" to earn money, thus making a hasty decision.

Yes, generates interest in the what is available. The young women can align with what their goals may be.

Opportunities for recruitment however the camp has much wider reach for girls to look at opportunities in primarily male fields

Yes longterm

Yes - it will give the participants a good overview of some of the Emergency Service organisations and some of the tasks that are performed. They will also have the opportunity to see if this is something their interested in and comfortable doing. If it sparks an interest, I am sure it is something they would consider continuing via a cadet or volunteer program.

Yes - will break down that initial barrier

- Recommendation: Maintain the camp model as a long-term strategy to increase recruitment of women to FES

How to diversify the workforce: Inclusion and diversity strategies for FES agencies

Leaders were offered an opportunity to use their own experiences, workplace observations and imagination to provide advice about how to increase the number of women in FES as well as other tips for building a more diverse workplace. Data identified the following strategies:

- Community education
- Media coverage and good news stories
- Cadet programs
- Targeted recruitment
- More creative approach to quotas
- Community and cultural group meetings
- Greater involvement with schools
- Recruitment stands
- Inclusion, diversity and cultural champions
- Clear information about facilities and workplace
- Realistic promotional material
- More women in leadership roles
- Professional FES agencies e.g. WAFA
- Changing and challenging workplace culture
- More creative ways to develop women

Q: How do we increase the number of women and other diverse groups in FES by maybe 5% over the next 5-10 years?

Theme: 'We know exactly what needs to happen'

(Leader 1) Community education, exposure, good news stories, word of mouth, people telling their stories – their anecdotal successes and failures, their moment of growth. But I also think we need to be realistic and have an understanding,

(Leader 2) The Rural Fire Service does a really good cadet program and it is a good feed. But it's only limited by the amount of volunteers that can facilitate that ... more women in leadership and when volunteer positions.

(Leader 3) I know exactly what needs to happen. They need to go to the people that are probably more like the job. Their recruitment strategy, right now, is like a two-three month strategy where they say, "We're having recruitment on that day things open up. Here's your information. That's it." And it's just on the website, right? And that happens for two months a year. Most people even miss it. Unless you're looking at it, you miss it. How about having a regional information day every three months, way prior to the thing. Go to the cross-fit gyms, put a thing up – 'Fire and Rescue Recruitment Information Night' - two or three, four months beforehand so that these people can start thinking and going, "I might have a think of that," that sort of thing. The cross-fit gyms, the Anytime fitnesses, those are the places your going to get the females that are actually interested in

the physical job, in the physicality of the job ... [For Indigenous people? Maybe people from other cultural backgrounds?] Go to the meetings. There has to be community meetings outside recruitment. Go to the areas. Put up stands. The police have stands. I know we put up stands but they're little stands about Fire and Rescue, not about recruiting. The police have these recruiting stands everywhere you go. Or the army has these recruiting stands. There's no recruiting stands. There's Fire and Rescue trucks but people don't know to ask. If you got - at these fairs, at the Easter Show, at these recruitment stands at informational recruitment that will get people thinking.

(Leader 4) Well I think concepts like this [camp], I think promotions ... we are seeing a diversity of more and more different cultures becoming members and that's great. We're seeing women gradually get into roles – captains, senior deputies, things like that. I think it would help if the RFS adopted a policy like fire and rescue of having a target.

(Leader 5) ... I think it's also older men across all those services who do have that want for women to succeed, and it's actually finding those role models that exemplify - these guys have got their maturity. They've got to where they are because they're good at what they do, but they also understand the value of empowering other people around them ... make it really clear that we do have those facilities to accommodate your prayer needs, your food needs - whatever it is you need to do, we can accommodate that so you can still be true to yourself and give back to the community as a whole.

(Leader 6) I think we need to get involved with schools a lot more at this age level, because these are those formative years where they are watching TV shows, they are reading books, it is your exposure to what you can do and a balance of 'you can't do that' that we are fighting against ... careers nights, if we can plug into that as well, that's where having this, on top of the work experience program ... I would love it if we could build a cadet program, but I don't know if it is possible within fire and rescue.



Image 33, Challenging each other and societal views

(Leader 7) I think the perception in the public needs to change. The public perception [that] firefighting is a male dominated thing ... But I don't honestly know if I agree with the 50/50 that the fire rescue have bought in, because you should be applying for these things regardless of your gender ... Media. The media has a high influence ... I think the campaigns from the services need to probably change ... Well it's nice to have a female on the front of a brochure, but do people really look at the front of a brochure. They might just read what the brochure is and turn it over or throw it in the bin. Or is that the token female of the brigade that's on the front? You know what I mean ... Like physical and active and not their type promotional stuff.

(Leader 8) We need more women in leadership, we need more women in leadership just full stop ... I don't want to say 50/50 because it's the best person for the job, but there are women out there who would be the best person for the job. But they're not applying because of that in the first

place ... I'm waiting, it's a waiting game, I'm waiting for that generation to die, retire and go, because it's just this, you can't train someone whose core values just don't align with someone else's.

(Leader 9) We don't want anyone to feel excluded which is why we have these things in the first place ... I do feel that leadership courses should be catering to both genders and perhaps it doesn't have to be announced that it's a female based one, but perhaps when receiving the EOIs they may choose to select 50% of females to attend that course or 50% of female applications to attend that course. I think getting the support to females doesn't have to be as obvious as it's a female-only camp or a female-only course, it can be done in other ways that doesn't make anyone feel neglected or unheard ... So I think a lot of it is exposure to information and people that have done that and know the best ways to do that and have encountered the obstacles and overcome them is definitely fantastic which is why I've loved the WAFA idea, it's so good to pool those people together with a common goal that they want to learn and share with each other ... I do firmly believe that unfortunately it is also a cultural change

- Recommendation: Modify current diversity strategies and build new strategies based upon participant feedback

CONCLUSION

The GFES appears to have had both short and mid-term impact on the leaders in multiple ways. Most significantly in relation to interpersonal skill development, greater confidence in the workplace, and steps towards career progression. Evidence suggests that before, during and after the GFES each leader stood up in some way, and developed in even more ways as a direct result of their commitment to and participation in the GFES camp. The camp also had a significant impact on the leaders who volunteered at the camp in terms of:

- Altruism and role modelling
- Voice, confidence and courage
- Satisfied a need for further professional development and challenges
- Quiet leadership development
- Strengthened team and observation skills

In this sense the answer to the broad research question appears to be 'yes' - the camp model has leadership and professional development potential for the FES women who volunteer. It could also be surmised that this may increase the likelihood of them remaining in FES, though longitudinal data would be needed to verify retention rates as well as confirm if the leadership and development aspirations described by the participants actually eventuated.



Image 34, We've got this!



Image 35, Blurring boundaries between leaders and campers

SECTION 4 OTHER RELEVANT FINDINGS AND OBSERVATIONS

The following commentary is made based upon observation as well as participant data. They are recorded in a section of their own because they provide additional information about the processes for organising and conducting the camp that did not easily fall in Sections 2 and 3. This includes observations regarding the multi-agency model, communication mechanisms, matters of sustainability, the role of the camp director, feedback for improvement, and suggestions of other strategies that may further support FES diversity and inclusion agendas.

Multi-agency model

The multi-agency model provided the campers with a very genuine on the job experience in three agencies. This was an overwhelmingly positive aspect of the camp with most campers reporting that they enjoyed the variety alongside the insights it gave into the similarities and differences of each agency. This in turn helped them to make critical decisions about where their current and/or future occupational interests might lay, thus this approach opened up each agency equally as a volunteer and/or career option. Additionally, the multi-agency approach also exemplified the importance of working together in context specific teams to solve complex problems, as for example in a natural disaster requiring multi-agency deployment. For many young women this example also provided an injunction on their pre-conceived ideas about the roles of each agency as well as any real or perceived on the job animosities purported to exist between the agencies.

It should also be noted that multi-agency involvement was readily facilitated in the area in which this camp occurred i.e. close to many brigades for each agency. This may not be possible in other locations, for example rural areas.

- Recommendation: Carefully consider time, place and resources required to conduct a multi-agency camp
- Recommendation: Explore the option of any partner agency organising, hosting and co-ordinating a camp. This will require targeting lead personnel (perhaps the leaders in this project), staff capacity building and support, and a detailed operations manual

YMCA partnership

The involvement of the YMCA in this pilot has been significant and key to its success – this camp model, conducted in this way simply could not have happened in any other setting. Beyond the obvious site activity facilities, accommodation, and food the YMCA managers and staff contributed significantly to the schedule making at times critical decisions around timing and resourcing that only professionals involved in such activities on a day to day basis could do. The contribution of the individuals (managers and leaders) was beyond expectations and this enthusiasm and support for the GFES model is a significant factor in determining the impact of the camp as well as future possible iterations. This supports data from North America where those camps affiliated with youth organisations have a more sustained impact with long term gains for all involved, they are also better managed in terms of participant logistics, hence safety, ethics and care.

Responses from participants with regards to the YMCA partnership

It's been awesome.

It's been really good.

We get a break when we did the activities. Instead of being so hands on we get a chance to relax and enjoy - we're enjoying ourselves out there, but actually have time for ourselves is important.

I don't know, I just feel like they're a big contribution being able to even make this camp happen, having a place to run these activities.

And seeing Dawn [YMCA leader] get in with is amazing - So we feel like we're changing her life as well.

And with the media and stuff we've given the YMCA more highlight so they might get heaps more business.

I think it was good. I think it had pretty much everything we really needed.

It was a nice campus.

I loved the camp

(Leader 4) I think the staff have been really supportive, the management here have been really supportive. It's an ideal venue for this type of thing because some of the diversity of things – like they did the high swing, the rope work, down there on the river now with the building rafts and things like that. It's not necessarily what we do within those emergency services, but it gives a bit of diversion because if you don't have that and you have a full week of intensive training, as it were, then I don't believe you would get the same result because they need that time out, that fun time as part of the whole experience.



Image 36, Camp success via YMCA partnership

- Recommendation: Continue the current YMCA Camp Yarramundi partnership
- Recommendation: Secure a memorandum of understanding (or similar) with YMCA state/National bodies and/or individual camps

Chain of command and communication

Some conflict and role/reporting uncertainty was observed amongst leaders during the induction days and week long camp. This was also reported upon by a number of leaders during interviews. This is likely an inevitable outcome of the exploratory nature of the pilot with everything occurring for the first time for everyone – including a leader model such as the one used in this camp. North American camps do not adopt such a pastoral model thus this is new terrain so worthwhile for consideration in the future. Uncertainty and/or conflict was due to a number of reasons including:

- Uncertain reporting/communication structure
- Lack of clarity around the role of leaders
- Devalued contributions in activity facilitations
- Personality clashes
- Ranking and (in)experience
- No RFS key contact person
- Inter-agency animosity
- Differing leadership/fellowship styles
- Differing approaches/styles when interacting with the campers
- ‘Mothering’ styles vs hands off approaches

- Recommendation: Develop a clear leader role description and provide opportunity for this to be questioned and discussed prior to the camp
- Recommendation: Determine if leaders can/could/should facilitate activities or not as well as clarity around when this role applies
- Recommendation: Include a level of 1-3 senior leaders above leaders to establish a chain of command and communication. These senior leaders would be responsible for the leaders and their work with the campers, they would report to the camp director and YMCA staff.

The enthusiast and GFES camp champion

A key factor in the successful transference of the model to Australia was FRNSW Station Officer and *Fire Fighters Mutual Bank Girls' Fire and Emergency Services* camp director, Bronnie Mackintosh. She has had substantial first hand experience with these camps, has researched them in North America, and is utterly dedicated to them. She has championed this idea and sewn its seed for many years, and continues to be an excellent champion for change in FES around Australia and globally. She therefore has the know how, personality, status, contacts, organisational skills, media skills, resources and leadership experience to conduct such a camp. She holds most of the intellectual property and personal capital to run these camps, and this may be problematic when thinking about scalability and transferability of the GFES model to other agencies or States. If the model is to expand and grow other champions need to be trained up, SO Mackintosh might play some role in this, with the detailed operations manual developed from the GFES camp being an essential training document, alongside its significant evaluative role.



Image 37, Station Officer and camp director, Bronnie Mackintosh

- Recommendation: Prepare a detailed operations manual for the GFES model for both multi and single agency implementation. Use it to train other key influential agency personnel (local and interstate)
- Recommendation: Interview SO Mackintosh to gather key behind the scenes insights about the organisation, structure, promotion, day to day running, and future strategies around the camps, as well as develop a publication track record for the project
- Recommendation: Conduct an independent evaluation of the GFES model to determine areas of strengths and for improvement

Sustainability and ongoing viability of the GFES model

Given this is the first year of this model in Australia and that this was an extensive undertaking involving multiple agencies and personnel along with substantial resources it's important to think seriously about matters of best practice, scalability, and transferability in order to determine the sustainability and viability of the GFES model moving forward. This includes rigorous research. It is not the role of this report to make such decisions and it is highly recommended that the final FRNSW project technical report is predominantly used to determine matters of sustainability.

Best practice: Best practice is a highly contested term though important in determining the transferability of this GFES to other settings, and hence its ongoing viability and sustainability. Best practice isn't just the best practice, its practice that has been proven to work well and produce good results, and could therefore be recommended as a model for future and/or further application. In North America the model for young women hasn't been well researched, and instead relies heavily upon anecdotal evidence to assess impact as opposed to validated research. However, this anecdotal evidence is reliable, and sits along a growing pool of research about the impact of the camps. This suggests the GFES camp model to be good practice because it has consistently created successful experiences for 100s of women and in multiple sites in North America and now Australia. It has also increased the recruitment of women into FES and also remains a significant factor keeping FES women retained in their workplaces. These experiences are valid and suggest that there is value in repeating the model and sharing it more broadly.

- Recommendation: Conduct an independent evaluation of the GFES model. This must include economic, social, workplace, structural, technical, and environmental costs, outputs and impacts for all agencies and their partners

Scalability: There are many factors that may determine if the GFES model can be even more scalable. In many respects the current multi-agency model is the scaled model, and it is unlikely that this model could get much bigger in this single camp, except perhaps if participant numbers were increased, multiple camps were run simultaneously or more camps were taken into others regions and States. Scalability would also include single agencies taking on and deploying the model. These latter ideas are complex and require an industry led strategic plan including budget of direct and indirect costs, development of a detailed operations manual, and staff capacity building. Other partners also need to be considered, for example YMCA.

Transferability: There are a number of factors that may determine the extent to which the outcomes in this pilot camp can be achieved in another setting. However, the model has been successfully transferred from North America thus indicating it is transferable.

- Recommendation: Lead agencies to determine scalability and transferability of the GFES model in multiple directions, including increased numbers of camps, single agency camps, camps in rural and urban areas, and camps across Australia. It is likely that an agency like AFAC might be best situated to lead such investigations

Research: Longitudinal anecdotal evidence from North America supports this kind of model as a viable recruitment strategy, pathway and support mechanism for young women interested in a FES career pathway (refs). This evidence was important for approving this pilot in Australia, and data should continue to be gathered over time so as to justify significant expenditures and commitments of personnel, resources and time.

- Recommendation: Research must play a pivotal role in determining the short and long-term impact of the GFES model in Australia. This research should include the collection of data about the short and long-term impact, with longitudinal follow up to determine career pathways an essential element

Media coverage and impact

This camp was a 'good news story' for FES in NSW, most especially in light of numerous reports and inquiries across Australia into matters of governance and workplace culture. It is not the role of this report to way up the pros and cons of setting up the camp in this way i.e. as an equity strategy with potential to tell a different kind of story and to show pro-active approach to gender in FES. It was, however very obvious to all participants that media coverage was important, though as a way in which to promote the camp as opposed to model equity and/or 'good news' in a less than favourable political context. This aside the media involvement and high level political exposure did disrupt the camp and the participants. The campers and leaders were captivated, bemused, annoyed and exhausted by this involvement so some consideration might need to be given to how to involve the media in less disruptive ways. Most especially on hot days around lunchtime and with some participants not eating until 2pm, and the scheduling changes that precipitated.

The camp generated much conversation in the media and hence society, which was arguably one of its aims – to challenge assumptions and open opportunities. Examination of social media around the time, including through partner agency Facebook pages, and viewer comments about the feature on Sunrise displayed that the public remains ambivalent to women in FES and in some cases showed open hostility. Requests for a 'boys camp' display that we will have a long way to go in Australia before women and girls will have equal treatment and expectations regarding capabilities and skills. The commentary indicated that most people in society do not know the difference between equality and equity, and that whilst the camp provoked thinking around this at times the messages were unkind and violent. This raises two questions. Firstly, should the camp be preparing the campers for the 'reality' of male dominated workplaces? And, secondly should the camp also be preparing them for returning home post camp to these kinds of comments about them, their abilities and what they can or cannot do? These are important to consider moving forward or

indeed with regards to any diversity strategy that seeks to recruit from minority groups. Great care should be taken with regards to messages, processes and support that may need to be provided against the backdrop of dominant views around both FES and masculinity. As a contrast to this, the above 'good news story' is shared.

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GIRLS ON FIRE



On 2 December 2018 I was lucky enough to be one of 20 young girls aged between 15 and 17 selected for the first ever Inaugural Girls Fire and Emergency Services Camp. The six-day camp was run to promote and increase numbers of women in the emergency services agencies by showing us that we can do whatever we like no matter what the stereotype. Firefighting is a job that is traditionally associated with men as 95% of the firefighting recruits are male. Firefighter Bronnie Mackintosh is the founder of the Girls on Fire Camp as she started the Girls on Fire group after examining how agencies in other countries encourage diversity within their ranks.

Throughout the week I was involved in numerous activities including theory and practical work with fire science, kitchen fire simulators, gas attacks, road crash rescue and trauma forum, cave maze rescue, flood boat rescue, community safety presentations and even team building activities such as, high and low ropes, abseiling, giant swing and a hike to an overnight campsite. During the week State Emergency Services (SES) and Rural Fire Service (RFS) volunteers along with NSW Fire and Rescue employees came to our camp at Yarramundi YMCA, to increase our knowledge of their roles and what they do. We met many young inspiring men and women and it helped increase our confidence and resilience and encouraged problem solving, teamwork and leadership.

Twenty young girls and myself were split into four platoons - red, yellow, green and blue. Within our platoons we worked as a team to come up with a team flag that would represent us throughout the week. On 7 December we had our graduation from the camp. At the graduation we had the RFS Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons and Fire and Rescue Commissioner Paul Baxter come to help present our certificates. Each participant received a graduation certificate after which I got up to deliver a speech on behalf of the team leaders and girls to thank everyone and to thank Bronnie. During the ceremony there was a surprise Leadership Award given out to a participant who showed the best leadership skills and team skills throughout the week. I was lucky enough to receive that award.

The Girls on Fire Camp was the best thing I have ever attended, I had made lifelong friends, been on the front page of the Sydney Morning Herald, experienced skills and activities I would not experience in my every day life and I have learnt things that will help me to be the best emergency service woman I can be.

If you ever get the opportunity to apply for this camp (applications for next year's camp will be available on their website) please do, you will not regret it.

Taylor Adair
Year 10



14 Macksville High School Newsletter

Image 38, A good news story back at school

How to improve the camp: Leader and camper feedback

Both the campers and leaders were asked to provide feedback or tips about how to improve the camp. They were prompted to comment upon their experiences, the activities, camp structure, people/personnel involved, setting/venue, and anything they thought could improve the camp from their perspective.

Data identified the following feedback from leaders for improving the camp:

(Leader 1) I would love to continue being a part of these camps. I would love to see these camps continue to run. I think the opportunities that are afforded to the campers, but also the opportunity to give community education to the rest of society. And I think campers that are both boys and girls would be fantastic but I see real value in separating the genders, at this age especially because they're so impressionable.

(Leader 3) I have one but it's a little bit controversial ... I think there needs to be a bit more vetting of some of the applicants. I think the applicants with some of the behavioural problems are pulling back some of the others and it's not appropriate for this sort of camp ... Because I feel like there's three or four campers that are going to lose this experience due to their compassion and empathy and protecting that ... And I also don't think you should have anyone who knows each other ... Sisters and two people from the same school.

(Leader 4) Nothing jumps out that could be better, I believe, and particularly for a first camp that it's been very well organised; it's encompassed a great deal of experience for the girls ... maybe encompass some CPR with defibrillators white water work ... I think the staff have been really supportive, the management here have been really supportive. It's an ideal venue for this type of thing because some of the diversity of things – like they did the high swing, the rope work, down there on the river now with the building rafts and things like that. It's not necessarily what we do within those emergency services, but it gives a bit of diversion because if you don't have that and you have a full week of intensive training, as it were, then I don't believe you would get the same result because they need that time out, that fun time as part of the whole experience ... I think Tuesday night – because last night they did the code rescue on top of a pretty full day, on top of that pretty full Monday – they were pretty tired last night. It was wonderful at PT this morning just to do stretches and meditation and they all commented how much they enjoyed that; so that cut in just at the absolute right time. And I think this combination of high pressure, relaxation, quiet time, is a good combination.



Image 39, Leaders telling it how it is

(Leader 5) I think advice-wise looking at a holistic perspective of a program. I think what needs to be is that I think there needs to be more administrative support for the three agency representative heads. To me, their role is the strategic aspect, the pushing for the media engagement, the engagement with the heads of services, the engagement with backers with supporters. The administrative side and all that day-to-day stuff needs to be managed across all those three agencies, or four agencies, or whatever comes in so that they can focus on that big picture. This area here focuses on the stuff that ticks, the stuff that delivers, the tasks that - all the crappy stuff that these people don't need to be concerned about. A)

It takes pressure off them as individuals, but it also lets them do what they do best, which is follow that vision and follow that outcome that they want, and have someone do it for them. With regards to team leaders and people involved, I think it's important that there is a good male balance as well. I think that sends a positive message, not only from the perspective that this is not just girls beating their chest about we just want girls. This is girls seeing that there are lots of good men out there that are supportive, that are encouraging, that see the value in diversity, and gender equity, and supporting women to achieve and setting them up for success ... I think mental health, I think mental strength, just understanding how important this is, and time for self. And that it is okay to go, you know what? No, I'm doing this for me. AS much as I would like to do it for everybody else, I'm entitled and it is my right to do stuff for me, and it's okay to say 'no'. You don't have to be at everyone's beck and call, because once your brain is tired, you're no good to anybody, let alone yourself.

(Leader 6) I think we need to change the structure slightly to support Bronnie and the role that she is in, I would suggest utilising a similar model to what we use in the sport and rec system, we have a camp director, I could see Bronnie being the camp director, but having two or three assistant directors underneath her, who deal with the day-to-day housekeeping ... I think having that third layer where we have got these directors that are floating problem-solvers and then the group leaders can be with their group the entire time. It is hard being a group leader if you don't have that outdoor background, so maybe if we had people who weren't as confident, pairing them with a facilitator or someone from the Y, so they have got that person to access ... Building on the leaders that we have for this year, obviously not everyone will be able to come back but I think the ones that are happy to step up into that bit more of a background problem solver role, because there are a few of us that are quite comfortable in that level, with the backgrounds that we have. It is not that we don't like group leading, it is just as I said, I feel guilty that I am not spending as much time with my platoon, but I know that I can't not do that, otherwise the activities aren't going to happen. So, it would just be a change in structure that would be more supportive both up and down the chain ... Obviously we are going to tighten up on activities, tighten up on timings, I loved the disc profile but I think we need a different facilitator, someone who is a bit more high energy, because it is a bit topic to drill down and having it at the end of the day, where they were tired as well, everyone was having to lean in to try and hear so, maybe a change of venue for that one ... squeaky chairs and not so great acoustics.

(Leader 7) I think maybe once it becomes a regular camp, an annual camp, and maybe a bit of competition to get on as a leader. I think that would probably be a good thing. To get a little bit of competition to get in. Like healthy competition I'm talking. I think then once the word gets out and it becomes what it is, what we want it to become, I think if you put that on your resume and say, "I've been lucky enough to team lead on the".

(Leader 9) I do. I also understand that this was a pilot and there were a couple of gaps; one being that I'll be honest and call out that we didn't have a leader for the RFS volunteers, there were quite a few of us ... I think it's important that the participants are screened in advance next time. It was only the day before that we found out that we potentially had some medical issues or some health issues with some of the participants that may require additional support ... I also just want to quickly raise in here that some people after having conversations with some of the participants where we thought they put their hand up for this, some of them ended up being pushed into this by parents and relatives and family, so not everyone was as keen to go on this camp as we originally thought. I think the people that we were keen and did put up their hand and had an active and interest in participating and obtaining an outcome absolutely walked away with a much greater knowledge of the insides of the Service, the core responsibilities and skills.

Data identified the following feedback from campers for improving the camp:

BLUE GROUP

There's nothing I'd want to take out though. I loved everything. It was really good.

Maybe just little breaks in between each activity so that way, you can just sit down, have a bit of a breather before you get back up and continue doing activities.

I would say just keep pulling in all these people with amazing stories because that's what came across. They were just like, "I have this person. I've got to give him some time to talk to us," and tell their story.

Maybe not in summer.

Maybe early spring or the middle of autumn. Or maybe in winter where it's cool throughout the day and it's not so hot so you would have less people going down or it's not such a concern being out in your gear throughout - on the field or an open space because you will still get hot but not the sun beating down and getting overheated.

I would have to say just the schedule. I loved doing everything but it was really packed and I just think sometimes it was a bit too squished. We were like, "We're late. We've got to this instead and that," but I loved doing everything but I think we just got really tired. Well, I personally did.

There's nothing I'd want to take out though. I loved everything. It was really good.

GREEN GROUP

I don't know I think it all worked really well. Sometimes not everyone would get a go at things because – so today with the car they just picked the same two people

Maybe you could shuffle some things around like the team – the high ropes course I think particularly would be better maybe towards the front because I think after that everyone was more relaxed with each other. It was just a lot more fun, team work was a lot easier I thought.

I do think we need an introduction like the hoses and the general idea of it first. Maybe the rock climbing on the second or third day because you get the thing and then – maybe have a general introduction to services and then build the team after.

I really liked this morning with that fire shed stuff where they lit all the stuff on fire. Those people were really good, I think. I learnt so much in that one session. And they were just really good at explaining everything. Everything was really easy to understand. They show you and I just thought it was great.

I liked that you could stick with the – open all the doors and windows in the sheds and let you stick your heads and stuff in. So you get to check out what it actually looks like after the burn and stuff.

And I liked leaving the campus as well and seeing a fire station, the training thing rather than just seeing everything set up. I don't know, seeing actually where it happens.

I think it was good. I think it had pretty much everything we really needed.

It was a nice campus.



Image 40, Water, teams, leaders, campers and environment

RED GROUP

Not cramming so much information in such little time.

Like when we had all the guest speakers they'd just go from one straight after the other straight after the other. You need to summarise, just to get them stuck. I can't really remember much of what the first few guest speakers said.

It's good to have a variety of people that talk to you, you'd be open to so many different possibilities in here and all the people that you've talked to have different experiences, you've got so many different opportunities.

We get a break when we did the activities. Instead of being so hands on we get a chance to relax and enjoy - we're enjoying ourselves out there, but actually have time for ourselves is important.

And with the media and stuff we've given the YMCA more highlight so they might get heaps more business.

I was emotionally drained throughout the camp because I had my school camp last week and then coming straight to this camp after that I just wasn't emotionally and physically ready for it.

YELLOW GROUP

I don't know. Maybe a little bit longer so that the days aren't so full, just spread it out a bit more because as the week goes on you get a bit more tired and those talks are just a bit of a "ugh". So maybe just spread it out a bit more.

Yeah, having more days and more time for sleep because last night when we were all sitting there watching a video I nearly fell asleep because I was that tired. When I'm sitting down not doing anything I get really tired, but when I'm up active running around doing stuff I'm not tired. It's just that get into to bed really late, having to get up really early, it's just a bit hard.

I think next time – maybe not at the start but at the end for the graduation or when the girls leave, if they could get a pack of some papers and things that can talk you through the next steps and if you do want to apply to be a volunteer, just sheets of paper that talk you through it and have contacts maybe that can help you where to go.

I think a little more information about how to actually get into a service would be better.

Probably just the same, just ways on how to go onto the volunteering even or a career path, just places or websites even.

Instead of just going home and not knowing, if there's some physical – we come home determined and if we have that it's like a reminder for us to actually do it.

Yeah, they timed it really well in the year too I think for the feedback. It's a term for many schools it's not too rough of work, we're coming to the end of the year.

And we've done all our exams.

Yeah, so I think they timed that really well because it was easy to get time off school.

- Recommendation: Use participant feedback alongside other evaluation mechanisms to help inform future directions/iterations of the camp
- Recommendation: Carefully consider the schedule to ensure enough down time from all camp activities, between activity rest/thinking time, timing and length of each day, number of activities and evening presentations
- Recommendations: Provide details to would be participants about the physical and emotional expectations of the camp including things to prepare for and ways to prepare
- Recommendation: Provide sign up opportunities on graduation day or evening before to capture interest and gather enrolments whilst in the camp



Image 41, Putting the wet stuff on the hot stuff

SECTION 5 SUMMARY AND LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

It was not the purpose of this report to decide if this kind of camp model or structure should or should not be supported or promoted by FES agencies in Australia as a recruitment, leadership, professional development or retention initiative. This is because there are many other factors that need to be carefully considered beyond the experiences of the participants, and beyond the remit of this research. Nor is the reports purpose to draw cause and effect between the experiences and impact of the camp on participants and their future occupational choices, for that longitudinal research would be required. However, this report does one important thing. It presents qualitative data collected about the experience of *The Fire Fighters Mutual Bank Girls' Fire and Emergency Services camp* and provides data driven recommendations to lead agencies, the Australasian Fire and Emergency Services Authority (AFAC), and Fire & Rescue New South Wales (FRNSW) and their partner NSW agencies, Rural Fire Service (RFS) and State Emergency Service (SES). It is these agencies who will now the puzzle pieces together in order to decide 'what next'. What is clear and consistent from the data in this research is that the pilot of this camp, as well as this particular model, was a huge success in the eyes, minds, hearts and bodies of all of the participants (including YMCA staff and activity facilitators on various days). The research therefore supports the claims that the camp model has recruitment, development and leadership potential, and that his findings and data contained within might be y=used to guide future strategies in these areas as well as informing important sector/industry/agency diversity and inclusion agendas. The complete list of recommendations listed below are intended to guide and support these actions, they are put forward as a way forward not just in the FES sector but also with regards to achieving gender equality in Australian society.

Complete list of recommendations

Campers

1. Recommendation: Continue to recruit across age ranges though also consider the needs of older and/or FES experienced campers when forming groups
2. Recommendation: Continue to recruit with a geography lens in mind
3. Recommendation: Target school career counsellors and other community organisations as key informants in promotion of FES to young women
4. Recommendation: Consider recruiting young people with no previous FES experience or familial contacts/support to broaden the pool of applicants
5. Recommendation: Consider targeted recruitment strategies for ethnically and culturally diverse participants via a variety of culturally specific strategies and organisations
6. Recommendation: Targeted recruitment practices could occur in team sports settings, likely those traditionally perceived to be non-traditional for females, especially soccer. There also seems to be some benefit in approaching gyms and other leisure related groups/community organisations to attract young women in the 17-21 years bracket
7. Recommendation: Maintain the right balance between optimal challenge, thrill, risk/danger, novelty, learning, problem solving and teamwork in activities to capture the attention of campers
8. Recommendation: Engage young women in the technical and knowledge based aspects of FES often, with time to question and synthesise before trying
9. Recommendation: Maintain physical intensity of activities in order to reinforce the physical demands of the job, future testing requirements and closeness to FES on the job work
10. Recommendation: Continue to develop interpersonal and personal skills that relate to the FES as well as providing strategies and practice for developing other everyday emotional and mental skills
11. Recommendation: Maintain intense focus on developing teamwork, communication, leadership, and followship skills that build confidence, trust and respect
12. Recommendation: Maintain continual reference to 'on the job' skills and the role of FES in society
13. Recommendation: Provide time to create links between skills, attitudes and knowledge developed in camp with their world outside – make links regularly

14. Recommendation: Provide positive reinforcement and instructional feedback at every opportunity in order to promote learning
15. Recommendation: Provide time and space for campers to reflect upon their lessons and learning and pose questions for deeper understanding
16. Recommendation: Conduct longitudinal research into the ongoing impact of the camp, most especially in relation to recruitment to FES
17. Recommendation: Continue to include motivated leaders who offer a variety of life, FES and career experiences
18. Recommendation: Continue to reinforce that gender norms influence the ways in which women experience society and also their workplaces
19. Recommendation: Consider the future role of past campers as promoters and advocates of GFES camps as well as the FES.
20. Recommendation: Engage past campers in future camps as junior leaders/squad leaders as a further recruitment as well as mentoring strategy

Leaders

1. Recommendation: Continue to recruit across age ranges though re-consider the inclusion of retirees, late career personnel or those not interested in career development
2. Recommendation: Continue to recruit with a geography lens in mind
3. Recommendation: Consider targeted recruitment strategies for people of diverse genders, sexes and sexualities
4. Recommendation: Consider targeted recruitment strategies for ethnically and culturally diverse participants (campers and leaders) via a variety of culturally specific strategies and organisations
5. Recommendation: Conduct research to identify FES personnel social biases and develop targeted training and development
6. Recommendation: Consider targeted recruitment of women already in the workforce or who are returning to it
7. Recommendation: Target young people at school in years 8-12 (likely with different strategies), and older young people through TAFE and other technical training institutions, and possibly university settings
8. Recommendation: Targeted recruitment practices could occur in team sports settings, likely those traditionally perceived to be non-traditional for females. There also seems to be some benefit in approaching gyms and other leisure related groups/community organisations to attract older/more life experienced women to FES
9. Recommendation: Design recruitment strategies for women based upon the development of skills and attributes associated with teamwork/sociality, optimal challenge, confidence and strength of character. Avoid an over reliance on exaggerated physical demands
10. Recommendation: Design recruitment strategies based upon assets and strengths and that include a variety of cognitive, social, technical and physical challenges
11. Recommendation: Determine strategies to maintain ongoing support of camp leaders, mentorship and development post camp involvement
12. Recommendation: Provide specific advice and support before, during and after the camp about ways in which to develop leadership skills. This could be by way of workshops and/or other training provided to the leaders who volunteer i.e. incentivise involvement and make this a specific training opportunity
13. Recommendation: Conduct longitudinal research to measure the ongoing impact of the camp in terms of development, further education, leadership, career promotion and personal skill development

14. Recommendation: Provide equity programs for FES women who wish to advance their careers e.g. mentoring, development and training
15. Recommendation: Conduct research to benchmark subtle and unconscious cultural practices in the FES workplace via the identification of social bias rates and subsequent training to ensure a safe workplace for all members of the FES community
16. Recommendation: Ensure all managers in FES abide by anti-discrimination policies, treat personnel equally, and have strong communication skills
17. Recommendation: Maintain the leader roles in order to gather important insider data on the camper experiences
18. Recommendation: Maintain the camp model as a long-term strategy to increase recruitment of women to FES
19. Recommendation: Modify current diversity strategies and build new strategies based upon participant feedback

Other recommendations

1. Recommendation: Carefully consider time, place and resources required to conduct a multi-agency camp
2. Recommendation: Explore the option of any partner agency organising, hosting and co-ordinating a camp. This will require targeting lead personnel (perhaps the leaders in this project), staff capacity building and support, and a detailed operations manual
3. Recommendation: Continue the current YMCA Camp Yarramundi partnership
4. Recommendation: Secure a memorandum of understanding (or similar) with YMCA state/National bodies and/or individual camps
5. Recommendation: Develop a clear leader role description and provide opportunity for this to be questioned and discussed prior to the camp
6. Recommendation: Determine if leaders can/could/should facilitate activities or not as well as clarity around when this role applies
7. Recommendation: Include a level of 1-3 senior leaders above leaders to establish a chain of command and communication. These senior leaders would be responsible for the leaders and their work with the campers, they would report to the camp director and YMCA staff.
8. Recommendation: Conduct an independent evaluation of the GFES model. This must include economic, social, workplace, structural, technical, and environmental costs, outputs and impacts for all agencies and their partners
9. Recommendation: Lead agencies to determine scalability and transferability of the GFES model in multiple directions, including increased numbers of camps, single agency camps, camps in rural and urban areas, and camps across Australia. It is likely that an agency like AFAC might be best situated to lead such investigations
10. Recommendation: Research must play a pivotal role in determining the short and long-term impact of the GFES model in Australia. This research should include the collection of data about the short and long-term impact, with longitudinal follow up to determine career pathways an essential element
11. Recommendation: Prepare a detailed operations manual for the GFES model for both multi and single agency implementation. Use it to train other key influential agency personnel (local and interstate)
12. Recommendation: Interview SO Mackintosh to gather key behind the scenes insights about the organisation, structure, promotion, day to day running, and future strategies around the camps, as well as develop a publication track record for the project
13. Recommendation: Conduct an independent evaluation of the GFES model to determine areas of strengths and for improvement
14. Recommendation: Use participant feedback alongside other evaluation mechanisms to help inform future directions/iterations of the camp

15. Recommendation: Carefully consider the schedule to ensure enough down time from all camp activities, between activity rest/thinking time, timing and length of each day, number of activities and evening presentations
16. Recommendations: Provide details to would be participants about the physical and emotional expectations of the camp including things to prepare for and ways to prepare
17. Recommendation: Provide sign up opportunities on graduation day or evening before to capture interest and gather enrolments whilst in the camp



Image 42, Hands up for camp success

APPENDIX A

A.1 Explanatory statement (LEADERS)

Project Title: *Girls on fire: An investigation of alternative movement pedagogies to promote inclusion, resilience and engagement of young women in physical activity*

Project Number: CF16/1759 - 2016000912

Chief Investigator's name: DR KAREN LAMBERT

Faculty of Education, Monash University

Phone: +613 99044400 (mobile: 0415564551)

email: karen.lambert@monash.edu

You are invited to take part in this study. Please read this Explanatory Statement in full before deciding whether or not to participate in this research. If you would like further information regarding any aspect of this project, you are encouraged to contact the researchers via the phone numbers or email addresses listed above.

What does the research involve?

The aim of this project is to investigate the potential of an inclusive and girl-friendly fire and emergency services (FES) camp structure and design to provide insights into the specific needs of women and girls who may be considering careers in male dominated workplaces, for example FES. Specifically, the project seeks to determine if the camps might be one small solution to the gender equity, diversity and inclusion challenges of FES, as well as serve as a possible recruitment, professional development, leadership and retention strategy. It also seeks to explore alternative movement models, approaches and activities for engaging and teaching young women to value lifelong approaches to movement and physical activity. Such an investigation has the potential to inform multiple stakeholders invested in the health and wellbeing of young women locally, nationally and internationally. The research questions appear below:

- Are fire and emergency service camps for young women an effective recruitment strategy?
- Are fire and emergency service camps for young women an effective retention, leadership and professional development strategy for personnel currently working in the FES workforce?

These questions are based upon research conducted in North America over the past 2 years which suggests the camps have multiple impacts including recruitment, retention, leadership and skill development for both volunteers as well as young women who participate in them.

If, after reading this **Explanatory Form** and asking questions you agree to be involved you will be asked to sign a **Consent Form** (also attached). On this **Consent Form** there is a list of the various methods that we are using to collect data in this research. You can be involved in any or all and need only tick those methods you consent to participating in. To help make this choice below is a brief explanation of each of our methods so that you know what you will be asked to do and how much time it will take. All will be scheduled into the camp program.

- **Survey:** collects basic demographic information about you, your role in the camp, and in your workplace. This may be done face to face or online and should take around 10-20 minutes to complete
- **Focus group:** this is a kind of interview with 2 or more people who sit together with an interviewer to answer some questions about camp experiences and roles, observations of the impact of the camps on young women and yourself, your own past movement activities, career progression and other aspects related to working in fire and emergency services. The focus group should take around 60 minutes to complete
- **Interview:** this is a one to one interview with an interviewer to answer specific questions about camp experiences and roles, camp structure and process, the role of the camps, observations of the impact of the camps on young women and yourself, career progression and other aspects related to working in fire and emergency services. The interview should take around 30-45 minutes to complete
- **Observation:** this will occur with your consent and knowledge and involves the researcher observing interactions, processes, practices, and outcomes of involvement as well as taking notes on what happens during the day to day running of the camp. This will not take any of your time
- **Photography/videography:** this will occur with your consent and knowledge and will take in the camp environment to capture the scene/place, processes, practices, interactions, and outcomes of involvement. Any photographs/videos will be taken of the participants only (i.e. not of non-consenting participants). This will not take any of your time
- **Debriefing/professional development:** facilitated professional development and daily feedback sessions will occur throughout the camp in order to inform practices and procedures

Why were you chosen for this research?

You have been chosen for this research because, via a workplace expression of interest and application process you have been selected to help pioneer the inaugural girl's fire and emergency services camps in Australia.

Source of funding

This research is conducted with the kind support of a Monash University, Faculty of Education Seeding Grant.

Consenting to participate in the project and withdrawing from the research

You are receiving this form in order to provide you with as much information as possible in advance in order to make an informed decision about your involvement. Being in this study is completely voluntary - you are not under any obligation to consent and, if you do consent, you can withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with Monash University, Karen Lambert or any partner agencies involved in the project.

If you agree to be involved in any aspect of the research (described above) sign the **Consent form** and leave it out the front when you leave.

Please remember that you are also free to withdraw at any time after consenting to be involved. If you do not wish to be involved you don't need to do anything simply hand in the blank **Consent Form** when you leave. Choosing not to participate in no way effects your capacity to contribute to dialogue around the issues raised in the future, and should you change your mind you can join into the project at any time as long as the **Consent form** is signed and returned. No personal details will be recorded, however, once the data has been collected anonymously, your responses cannot be withdrawn.

Possible benefits and risks to participants

It is expected that this project will benefit you as well as inform global, National and local players in the fire and emergency arena as well as government. On a personal level stories, experiences and ideas will be heard, hence validating your commitment, visions and practices to both promote fire and emergency services as a viable career choice for women and to enhance the movement experiences of young women. This in turn offers a process of evaluation for many organisations involved in this project by providing quantifiable and quality research findings about the effectiveness of the fire camps for young women – to date there is limited research on the impact/efficacy of the camps, the practices engaged with or the outcomes of participation on young women, recruitment or retention - so we will be developing new knowledge.

The data generated has great potential to inform business planning, recruitment and retention strategies, professional and leadership development, and social inclusion policy development and enactment at a high level in in FES, as well as application in other community services (e.g. police) or even armed forces. The fundamental 'answers' from the project, as well as these more organisational/systemic musings will prove informative and instructive to local, national and global players in government, community safety, health and education.

There is some potential for this study to result in minor inconvenience to you in terms of timing (e.g. to set up the project parameters, complete surveys, conduct interviews and the like). If at any stage you feel any discomfort from the research process you can freely advise Karen Lambert and support will be provided. There are no foreseeable risks or harm or side-effects associated with your involvement in this research. Others will not be able to identify you as being involved and your involvement remains confidential unless you choose to inform others that you participated. In short it is anticipated that there may be minor inconvenience but minimal discomfort to you. As a matter of course follow up support will also be offered to you in the way of debrief sessions.

Confidentiality

The data collected will not be identifiable to anyone as no names will be included though pseudonyms will be used. This ensures your anonymity. When the data is published or spoken about you will be referred to collectively as 'key personnel' or 'volunteers' or according to the allocated pseudonym. It is therefore unlikely that you will be recognisable to others as being a participant in this research.

Once the data has been collected it will then be analysed so 'originals' of the data e.g. audio recordings, lengthy videos, participant observation journals/fieldwork diaries won't be shared publicly or openly. However transcribed text versions of your responses, relevant/edited photographs/videos, excerpts from fieldwork journals/notes will likely be made public at conferences and via presentations/discussions of findings in ours/your respective workplaces, in research writing and journal articles, and via reports to participant agencies/organisations. Other ways in which the data may be re-presented include: posters for poster presentations and/or reports on the project, blog posts during the data collection process, and to inform the development of a business case to continue to conduct girl's fire and emergency services camps in Australia. In all cases your details will not be included with pseudonyms provided where necessary to ensure your anonymity.

Storage of data

In the context of this research data includes all interview/focus group audio recordings and transcriptions, documents collected, fieldwork notes taken, emails where information/details of camp activities or processes are explained, photographs or video material agreed upon. This data will be stored on the computer of Karen Lambert accessed only by password. Any hardcopies of data will be stored for 7 years in a locked filing cabinet in Karen's office (Peninsula Campus, A4-28). If no longer required data will be destroyed from both the computer and filing cabinet after 7 years.

Results

Please indicate on the **Consent Form** if you wish to receive a copy of the research findings or reports.

Complaints

Should you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of the project, you are welcome to contact the Executive Officer, Monash University Human Research Ethics (MUHREC):

Executive Officer
Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC)
Room 111, Chancellery Building E,
24 Sports Walk, Clayton Campus
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A.2 Appendix 2: interview questions for leaders

Tell me a little about your involvement in this camp

Prompts:

- What's your role at this camp?
- How did you get involved? When? Why?
- What's the main reason you work/volunteer at this camp?
- What do you hope to gain from volunteering at this camp? Personal? Professional? Leadership? Other? Why are you here?
- Did you enjoy the camp? What did you learn?
- Would you sign up to do it again? Run another camp elsewhere?

Tell me about the kinds of things that go on in this camp

Prompts:

- What kinds of things do the participants/campers do at this camp?
- What's your favourite activity? Why?
- Did you attend a camp like this as a young person? If so, why and what was it like?

Tell me about the participants/campers who come along

Prompts:

- What kinds of girls come to these camps? What did you notice about them?
- Is there much diversity? Why do you think this is the case?

Tell me about the impact or effect of the camp on campers

Prompts:

- How do you think the camp develops the participants/campers? Personally? Physically? Emotionally? Socially?
- How do you know this? What do you see? Hear? Notice?
- What would be the most significant impact of the camp's activities/environment you have seen on a participant/camper?

Tell me a little about the link between the camps and career choices for young women

Prompts:

- Do you think the camps offer a good path to FEMS? i.e. are the camps useful in getting young women interested in and then progressing to FEMS careers? Please explain ...
- Do you think the camps are a good recruitment strategy? Why? Why not?
- What things would you do differently or change?

Tell me a little about the link between the camps and YOUR own career

Prompts:

- How might your involvement in the camp influence your own career? In what ways.
- Might the camp prepare you for promotion or leadership positions? Please explain
- What would you do to make this camp an even better professional development or leadership activity for FES personnel?
- Are your work colleagues encouraging of the work you do?
- Are your female/male colleagues supportive of this camp?

And finally,

- If you had a magic wand, what do you think needs to happen for the percentage of women in your own workforce to increase by 5%?
- How could your workplace improve its overall approach to diversity and inclusion?

A.3 Participant information (CAMPERS)

Project Title: Girls on fire: An investigation of alternative movement pedagogies to promote inclusion, resilience and engagement of young women in physical activity

Project Number: CF16/1759 - 2016000912

Chief Investigator's name: DR KAREN LAMBERT
Faculty of Education, Monash University
Phone: +613 99044400 (mobile: 0415564551)
email: karen.lambert@monash.edu

Your daughter/child/ward is invited to take part in this study and as they are likely to be under 18 participation requires **parental consent (FORM 2)**. It also requires **participant assent (FORM 3)** which basically means your daughter/child/ward can choose to be involved or not, and even if you give consent they are free to choose to participate. Both consent and assent forms must be completed and returned.

Please read this **Explanatory Statement (FORM 1)** in full yourself as well as to your daughter/child/ward before deciding whether or not they can participate in this research. If you would like further information regarding any aspect of this project, you are encouraged to contact the researchers via the phone numbers or email addresses listed above.

What does the research involve?

The aim of this project is to investigate the potential of an inclusive and girl-friendly fire and emergency services (FES) camp structure and design to provide insights into the specific needs of women and girls who may be considering careers in male dominated workplaces, for example FES. Specifically, the project seeks to determine if the camps might be one small solution to the gender equity, diversity and inclusion challenges of FES, as well as serve as a possible recruitment, professional development, leadership and retention strategy. It also seeks to explore alternative movement models, approaches and activities for engaging and teaching young women to value lifelong approaches to movement and physical activity. Such an investigation has the potential to inform multiple stakeholders invested in the health and wellbeing of young women locally, nationally and internationally.

The research questions appear below:

- Are fire and emergency service camps for young women an effective recruitment strategy?
- Are fire and emergency service camps for young women an effective retention, leadership and professional development strategy for personnel currently working in the FES workforce?

These questions are based upon research conducted in North America over the past 2 years which suggests the camps have multiple impacts including recruitment, retention, leadership and skill development for both volunteers as well as young women who participate in them.

If, after reading this **Explanatory Form** and asking any questions you **AGREE** for your daughter/child/ward to be involved you will be asked to sign a **Consent Form (FORM 2 - attached)**. Your daughter/child/ward after reading/hearing about the project will also be asked to sign an **Assent Form (FORM 3 - attached)**. On the Consent Form/Assent Form there is a list of the various methods that we are using to collect data in this research. You can be involved in any or all and need only tick those methods you consent to your daughter/child/ward participating in and the ones they also wish to participate in. To help make this choice below is a brief explanation of each of our methods so that you know what you will be asked to do and how much time it will take.

- **Questionnaire/Survey:** used to collect basic demographic information about your daughter/child/ward and how they engage with sport, physical activity and movement and how that makes them feel. Our surveys ask questions about physical aspects of self (activity, sport competence, strength, body, fitness, coordination, health) and emotional aspects of self (self esteem, self confidence, critical thinking). This will be done before the camp (pre) and after the camp (post). This may be done face to face (at camp) or online and should take around 15-30 minutes in total to complete
- **Focus group:** this is a kind of interview with 2 or more people who sit together with an interviewer to answer some questions about camp experiences and roles, observations of the impact of the camps on young women, past movement activities, career progression and other aspects related to being a young woman interested in fire and emergency services. The focus group should take around 45 minutes to complete
- **Interview:** this is a one to one interview with an interviewer to answer specific questions about camp experiences and roles, camp structure and process, the role of the camps, observations of the impact of the camps on young women, career progression and other aspects related to being a young woman interested in fire and emergency services. The interview should take around 30 minutes to complete
- **Observation:** this will occur with your consent/participant assent and knowledge and involves the researcher observing interactions, processes, practices, and outcomes of involvement as well as taking notes on what happens during the day to day running of the camp. This will not take any of your time
- **Photography/videography:** this will occur with your consent/participant assent and knowledge and will take in the camp environment to capture the scene/place, processes, practices, interactions, and outcomes of involvement. Any photographs/videos will be taken only of participants giving consent/assent. This will not take any of your time

Why were you chosen for this research?

Your daughter/child/ward has been chosen for this research because they are involved in this pioneering fire and emergency service activity in Australia that is of interest to administrators, leaders, workplaces and researchers in a number of countries. You have been contacted because your daughter/child/ward is likely to be attending one of these camps in the near future. The camp organisation you are in contact with has agreed to include this information in their registration/enrolment documents to make the process more straight forward and are supportive of the research. It is important to note that non-consent/assent will not determine acceptance to or attendance at the camp for your daughter/child/ward – involvement is entirely voluntary.

Source of funding

This research is conducted with the kind support of a Monash University, Faculty of Education Seeding Grant.

Consenting to participate in the project and withdrawing from the research

You are receiving this form (and others) in order to provide you with as much information as possible in advance in order to make an informed decision about involvement. Being in this study is completely voluntary – you or your daughter/child/ward are not under any obligation to consent/assent and, if you do consent/assent, you can withdraw at any time without affecting your relationship with Monash University, Karen Lambert or the affiliated fire and emergency services camp.

If you agree to be involved in aspects of the research (as described above) simply sign the **Consent Form (FORM 2)** yourself and have your daughter/child/ward sign the **Assent Form (FORM 3)** and return it all in the special envelope provided with your camp documentation (see the envelope 'Monash University ONLY'). Please remember that you are also free to withdraw at any time after consenting to be involved.

If you do not wish to be involved you don't need to do anything – non return of the **Consent/Assent Forms** means that you have opted out of the research. Choosing not to participate in no way effects your capacity to contribute to dialogue around the issues raised in the future, and should you change your mind you and/or your daughter/child/ward can join into the project at any time as long as the Consent Form and Assent Forms are signed. No personal details from you will be recorded, however, once the data has been collected anonymously, your responses cannot be withdrawn.

Possible benefits and risks to participants

It is expected that this project will benefit you, your daughter/child/ward, and camp administrators as well as inform global, National and local players in the fire and emergency services arena as well as government.

On a personal level stories, experiences and ideas will be heard, hence validating your commitment, visions and practices to both promote fire and emergency services as a viable career choice for women and to enhance the movement experiences of young women. This in turn offers a process of evaluation for many organisations involved in this project by providing quantifiable and quality research findings about the effectiveness of the fire camps for young women – to date there is limited research on the impact/efficacy of the camps, the practices engaged with or the outcomes of participation on young women, recruitment or retention - so we will be developing new knowledge.

The data generated has great potential to inform business planning, recruitment and retention strategies, professional and leadership development, and social inclusion policy development and enactment at a high level in FES, as well as application in other community services (e.g. police) or even armed forces. The fundamental 'answers' from the project, as well as these more organisational/systemic musings will prove informative and instructive to local, national and global players in government, community safety, health and education.

There is some potential for this study to result in minor inconvenience to your daughter/child/ward in terms of timing (e.g. to set up the project parameters, complete surveys, conduct interviews during camp and the like). If at any stage they feel any discomfort from the research process they can freely advise Karen Lambert and support will be provided. There are no foreseeable risks or harm or side-effects associated with involvement in this research. Others will not be able to identify your daughter/child/ward as being involved (except in any imagery you consent to) and their involvement remains confidential unless they choose to inform others that they participated or are participating. In short it is anticipated that there may be minor inconvenience but minimal discomfort to your daughter/child/ward. As a matter of course follow up support will also be offered in the way of debrief sessions.

Confidentiality

The data collected will not be identifiable to anyone as no names will be included though pseudonyms will be used. This ensures participant anonymity. When the data is published or spoken about your daughter/child/ward will be referred to collectively as 'camp participants', 'campers' or 'cadets'. It is therefore unlikely that you they be recognisable to others as being a participant in this research, unless photography/videography is consented to.

Once the data has been collected it will then be analysed so 'originals' of the data e.g. audio recordings, videos, participant observation journals/fieldwork diaries won't be shared publicly or openly. However transcribed text versions of responses, relevant/edited photographs/videos, excerpts from fieldwork journals/notes will likely be made public at conferences and via presentations/discussions of findings in workplaces, in research writing and journal articles, and via reports to participant agencies/organisations. Other ways in which the data may be re-presented include: posters for poster presentations and/or reports on the project, blog posts during the data collection process, and to inform the development of a business case to conduct youth fire service camps in Australia. In all cases your daughter/child/ward details will not be included with pseudonyms provided where necessary to ensure anonymity. The data will be stored securely on a password protected computer.

Storage of data

In the context of this research data includes all interview/focus group audio recordings and transcriptions, documents collected, fieldwork notes taken, emails where information/details of camp activities or processes are explained, photographs or video material agreed upon. This data will be stored on the computer of Karen Lambert accessed only by password. Any hardcopies of data will be stored for 7 years in a locked filing cabinet in Karen's office (Peninsula Campus, A4-28). If no longer required data will be destroyed from both the computer and filing cabinet after 7 years.

Results

Please indicate on the **Consent Form** and **Assent Form** if you wish to receive a copy of the research findings or reports.

Complaints

Should you have any concerns or complaints about the conduct of the project, you are welcome to contact the Executive Officer, Monash University Human Research Ethics (MUHREC):

Executive Officer
Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC)
Room 111, Chancellery Building E,
24 Sports Walk, Clayton Campus
Research Office
Monash University VIC 3800

Tel: +61 3 9905 2052

Email: muhrec@monash.edu

Fax: +61 3 9905 3831

Thank you,

Dr Karen Lambert

A.4 Focus group questions for campers

Tell me a little about the kinds of movements, sports or physical activities you like to do

Prompts:

- Do you play sports? What do you play? Why?
- What about other physical activities you might do? e.g. dance, games, running etc; farm work, around the house, in a part time job
- How does it make you feel when you do this?
- How would you describe yourself in relation to movement skills/abilities?

Tell me a little about how you got involved in this camp

Prompts:

- How did you find out about this camp? Get involved? When?
- Why is this camp interesting to you? Why are you here?
- What's the main reason you came to this camp?
- Are you interested in joining fire and emergency services? Career? Volunteer?
- What do you hope to get from attending this camp? To walk away with?
- Do you think more girls should do stuff like this? Why? Why not?

Tell me about the kinds of activities that go on in this camp

Prompts:

- Overall, how has the camp experience been for you?
- What did you learn as a result of coming to this camp?
- What did you enjoy the most? Why?
- What did you enjoy the least? Why?
- What do movement like this feel like? In your body? Your muscles? Can you describe it ...
- How do these movements make you feel? In your body? Emotionally? Can you describe it ...

Senses: prompts

- Do you notice your senses when doing the activities? e.g. what can you hear, see, smell, feel, taste?
- What do you feel 'in the moment' of doing these activities?
- Whilst being here on camp, what activities have given you the most pleasure? Why?
- How about the most pain?
- What skills will you walk away with?

Tell me about the MENTAL aspects of the camp

Prompts:

- Are there times when you feel like quitting? What happens? How does it feel? Can you describe it ...
- How do you think about yourself when you are here? Why does that happen?
- What mental skills will you walk away with?
- Are these important for a young woman to have? In what ways?

Tell me about the SOCIAL aspects of the camp

Prompts:

- What kinds of social things do you do at camp? e.g. team stuff. How do you go with that? How does it feel? Can you describe it ...
- What social skills will you walk away with?
- What do your friends think about you being here? Your parents? Siblings?

Tell me about how we can improve the camp

Prompts:

- What practical things could be improved in the camp? e.g. activities, accommodation, venue
- How could the instructors at the camp do an even better job?

Tell me a little bit about your future career path

Prompts:

- Where can the skills you've mentioned be useful in the rest of your life? Are they important for a young woman?
- Are you intending to go on to fire, emergency, rescue or policing services? Why? Why not?
- Has the camp influenced this decision? How?
- Tell me a little bit about what you think that kind of career path involves. What will the job look and feel like?

And finally,

- If you had a magic wand, where do you see yourself in 5-10 years time?
- What kind of movement or physical activities will you be doing?
- What kind of work, job or career will you be doing? What kind of person will you be?

Further information

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