

I am writing to share my experience at WA Fire and Emergency Services Conference 2026.

During my time at WAFES, I was allowed the opportunity to network with active firefighters and Department of Fire and Emergency Services staff, as well as many of the state's top emergency services leadership members, especially Reece Whitby MLA and DFES Commissioner Darren Klemm, as well as other leadership members.

While getting valuable insights into working under pressure and getting through hard times through presentations from keynote speakers Jessica Watson and Greg Hire. Jessica Watson focused on sharing insights into the hardships of attempting to sail all the way around the world on a small boat, passing through hard times such as large storms, the mental challenge of being alone for multiple years, and recovering after multiple failures.

Greg Hire focused on outlining how to overcome the mental challenges of physical activity and how focusing on the small things really does matter, especially when decisions can mean life or death.

Additionally, a member of WAPOL (Water Police Western Australia) and a volunteer from Marine Rescue gave a presentation about how various organisations communicate to manage an incident, which is a crucial bit of knowledge to know when transitioning from a cadet to an active firefighter role.

By going to WAFES, many future opportunities for young people open. I now have direct connections with many people from across WA, all of whom I will work with in the future at incidents and events that run throughout the years.

I would highly recommend joining a volunteer emergency services position to other young people; it opens valuable doors for years to come.

Tavian Tripp

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