



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

AUSTRALIAN RED CROSS VICTORIA AWARDS

Speech by Mr Anthony Howard AM QC

Wednesday 8th May, 2019

Mrs Anne Macarthur OAM, Chairman of the Victorian Advisory Board, Australian Red Cross

Ms Judy Slatyer, National CEO, Australian Red Cross

Ms Kate Siebert, Acting Director (Victoria), Australian Red Cross

Ms Valerie Lawrence OAM, Chairman of the Zone Representatives' Committee, Australian Red Cross

Other office holders

Distinguished guests

Award recipients

Ladies and gentlemen

Good Morning all. The Governor joins with me in extending a warm welcome to you all at the Red Cross Victorian Awards ceremony for 2019.

In the spirit of reconciliation, I also acknowledge the traditional owners & custodians of this land on which we meet and pay my respects to their elders past and present and any elders here today.

Much good and varied work is done by the 6700 Red Cross members and volunteers in Victoria. Volunteering is the ultimate act of goodwill.

It demonstrates an individual's passion and kindness, generosity of spirit and a willingness to contribute to our community. We are about to hear a little more of such life-changing work by today's recipients. But before that, I wanted to briefly note some of the amazing achievements of the Red Cross over the past 12 months (by no means an adequate summary!)

- Assistance to Victorian prisoners and their families through sporting programs and the *FoodRedi* project.
- Support of many elderly and isolated Victorians through the *Telecross* and *Teleyarn* programs.
- Patient Transport volunteers drive more than 823,000 kms to get almost 5,000 clients to hospital and medical appointments.
- At North Melbourne, volunteers run the vital *Food and Clothes Pantry* and the *Bike Exchange program* for migrants and refugees.
- The *ThinkHuman* campaign targets young people to promote respectful communication on social media.
- Free accredited First Aid to over 3000 secondary students in the South Gippsland area.
- A program in the Geelong region to better support vulnerable families and mothers to nurture their children in their first 1000 days of life.
- Closer to home, we are delighted to host the annual *Blood Donor Day* in the Ballroom at Government House. Last year we had 134 donations with 39 first-timers.

And, of course, we cannot forget the inspiring work of the Emergency Services teams, which have responded to significant bushfires, drought, floods and the horrific Bourke St stabbing, providing assistance to over 3,700 affected people, including indigenous communities.

Early this year the Governor and I were privileged to undertake a 3-week tour of areas in Victoria affected by the 2009 bushfires. The Governor was the Patron of the 10-year anniversary of those unforgettable times. We spoke to hundreds of Victorians, many of whom were still traumatised by their terrible experiences. Universally, they heaped praise on the crucial work of the Red Cross, particularly the psychological first aid provided. I felt great pride in being your Patron.

Above all, service in the Red Cross is about caring for disadvantaged people in our community; according dignity to the vulnerable and making all people feel that they are valued and not alone in their time of need. To use the great words of the Victorian motto, such service promotes “peace and prosperity” in our land.

I commend the Chair and the Board, and all members and volunteers for their remarkable and enduring contribution to our community.

And I congratulate all recipients for their conspicuous and dedicated service.

It is now my pleasure to ask Ms Judy Slatyer to speak.