



## Council takes out Victorian Fire Awareness Award

South Gippsland Shire Council was presented with Fire Awareness Award on Wednesday night for their successful Business Continuity and Resilience Program.

The program—developed by the Shire’s economic development and tourism team with support through a grant from Regional Development Victoria—was designed to prepare businesses for times of emergency.

It comprised a series of scenario and crisis planning workshops and provided a foundation for the establishment of a shire-wide Business Emergency Leadership Group (BELG) by helping to identify industry leaders. BELG is now the recognised voice for the business community in times of crisis.

“Emergency preparation is important in our community and BELG members help to progress this message,” said Council’s Business Liaison officer Renae Littlejohn. “BELG members have given our emergency services insights into the local business community and have encouraged their business colleagues to prepare contingency plans. The importance of preparation cannot be understated.”

Council has already received substantial support for the program and in particular, the BELG collaboration, with a positive response received from the community, neighbouring Councils and senior emergency management representatives.

The award was presented at the RACV Club in Melbourne on Wednesday along with 17 other winning entries with Minister for Emergency Services, Jane Garrett and Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water, Lisa Neville in attendance.

“This award recognises the hard work of many people in our community,” Ms Littlejohn said. “Council’s emergency management team, together with local relief and recovery agencies and the business community have all been heavily involved and the commitment from all parties has been vital to the program’s success.”

The Fire Awareness Awards have been running for more than 30 years and are coordinated by Victoria’s three firefighting agencies, MFB, CFA and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP). This year more than 80 nominations were received with 31 shortlisted as finalists. For more information on this year’s winners, visit [fireawarenessawards.com.au](http://fireawarenessawards.com.au)