

# Youth sign up for an extreme weather challenge



Graham Readfearn

A NEW generation of emergency volunteers is being trained to deal with extreme weather conditions.

Green Cross Australia has launched its Extreme Weather Heroes campaign to inspire 20,000 people under 30 to join emergency response volunteer groups.

Chief executive Mara Bun said the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change had predicted Australia would experience more frequent and more intense floods and fires as a result of climate change.

"Of course, we have had floods, fires and storms before humans even walked the land, but there are a lot more of us than there used to be and the extra CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere is playing havoc with the weather," Ms Bun said.

The campaign was launched online and uses Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Television advertisements will begin on Sunday.

Ayla Curtis, 22, from Highgate Hill, has just completed training with the Queensland State Emergency Service.

"I have just spent five years at university so I wanted to be able to learn some practical skills," she said. "I can't wait to do my bit to help."

Emergency Services Minister Neil Roberts said Green Cross did a great job in raising awareness of climate change and promoting volunteering, particularly among young people.

"Any increase in the number of volunteers will add to the capacity of communities to prepare, respond and recover from natural disasters," Mr Roberts said.

Green Cross Australia, formed in June 2007, is part of a network launched by former Soviet Union president Mikhail Gorbachev.

Visit [www.extremeweatherheroes.org](http://www.extremeweatherheroes.org)

NEW recruit ... Ayla Curtis, 22, has just finished training with the Queensland SES.

Picture: Megan Cullen