

Kirra Vanzetti

From: phillip board [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 1 July 2017 4:25 PM
To: LCSC
Subject: Illegal Changes To The CFA.

To whom is concerned,

I have been a volunteer fire fighter in many forms for 60 years starting at 13 yrs of age North of Albury, the last 34 being an active member at Red Hill Brigade. My wife and I are still operational and are both CFA life members and holders of the NESM Vic Fires 09 (Black Saturday).

When I was a member of the AWU, and in any other workplace, it was illegal to make any changes in the workplace without proper consultation with all concerned parties, even if it was just to change smoko or lunch times. This legislation was brought in by the very party now ignoring this legislation.

Now without any consultation over major fundamental changes in the CFA, Comrade Andrews, at the urging of Comrade Marshall, has seen fit to oversee the sacking/forced resignation/resignation because of personal integrity, of the Emergency Services Minister, the CFA CEO, true and dedicated Chief Officers and the CFA Board. The silent majority of volunteers all know these have been replaced by Comrade Andrews puppets and as a consequence are therefore illegitimate.

We feel the only legitimate person is Chief Officer Steve Warrington who we know from his days as a volunteer and who has earned his place and is respected throughout the CFA.

It is clear the powers that be have no understanding of the true CFA. We exist in rural Victoria, accepting the lack of infrastructure and amenities. We also know and accept that bad stuff happens and on a large scale sometimes and if we are not prepared to help ourselves no one else will. It is because of this real men and women accept the responsibility to help those who are unable to help themselves and therefore join an organization like the CFA. We believe our community, our state, our country is worth protecting come what may, Fire, flood, accident, no matter. We also know that we are the backstop, the wicket keeper if you like, and if it gets past us there is no "Plan B". That is why we have an unwritten understanding with our neighbouring brigades, districts and states, that we will be there for them regardless, with the sure and certain promise that they will be there for us when we are overwhelmed. This is an understanding between all our brothers and sisters wherever they serve and it is unbreakable.

It is clear that Comrade Marshall has another agenda like seizing more control and power, increasing the size of his domain. If he gets his way he will have the power to ultimately withdraw all firefighting resources within Melbourne and all large rural cities and towns. If you don't think this could happen just wait until the next time he can't get what he wants. Rabid socialists will do anything legal or otherwise to achieve their aims. It has ever been thus.

The mercenary members of the CFA see us volunteers as some sort of semi-trained labour force only capable of providing the numbers for "Surge Capacity", their words, but the fact is we do not have shifts or time off duty as such. My wife and I are on duty 24/7. We never go away during Fire Season. If you come to grief in our patch regardless of the time of day or night or the weather it will be us and others like us who are committed to help you. There will not be a mercenary Fire-Fighter in sight. Our neighbouring brigade, Dromana, provides the Road Accident Rescue service in these parts. We are constantly calling on them for rescue tasks. They are the best in the business and they are all volunteers.

I have served on many Strike Team deployments over the years and have often witnessed clashes between the strike team leader and the token mercenary crew which is often deployed within our particular strike team. It is usually over some union based award they are entitled to or fundamental problem of taking orders from a qualified volunteer strike team leader. This leaves a toxic pall on the strike team and makes an often difficult job more unpleasant.

There is a fundamental difference between mercenary members and volunteers. The mercenary members are quite happy to see deployment times drag on. This is natural I suppose because it means more benefits and allowances but I'm sure they would deny it. On the other hand the vols just want to turn up, get the job done ASAP and get home because they are losing money and or burning up annual leave or RDOs and need to get home to protect their own patch.

The pea and thimble trick of all mercenary members transferring to FRV and then some contracted back to the CFA to do the job previously done by operations officers ie.put in direct charge of us, I find difficult to accept as I will be expected to take orders from someone outside my organization. I don't do it now and I see no reason to do it in the future. It is a back handed way of saying we cannot manage ourselves as we used to. I also believe that over time the FRV members will lose the knowledge and skills necessary to fight large scale wildfire just as the MFB has.

Regardless of all I have said and the colossal cost yet to be borne by the tax payer I have no problem with our Operations Officers. They have on the whole been good blokes and generally known what they are doing and I get along fine with most of the mercenary firefighters but there is a toxic rift between the two parts wholly due to political ideology pushed by two rabid socialists. The damage has been done. What has been said cannot be unsaid what has been done cannot be undone. Many good and honest people have been the victims of this illegal act and I believe the rift is too wide to mend. We have no option now but to go ahead with the breakup of the CFA and with a bit of good luck and positive effort maybe we will once again have a great all volunteer CFA.

There is a lesson here.

Not all our leaders are people of integrity nor do they care what damage they do blundering around in peoples lives.

From the heart,

2165260

F/F Phillip M Board



Kirra Vanzetti

From: phillip board <pmboard8@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, 3 July 2017 4:16 PM
To: LCSC
Subject: Illegal Changes To The CFA.

Categories: DOUBLE UP/AMENDMENT

Second submission.

After more thought I would like to make a further statement as it is probably the only chance I will get.

Comrade Andrews has clearly committed an illegal act. Why has he not been brought to account?

Obviously that is not going to happen.

Everything that flows from this act is therefore also from the poisoned chalice and as such is also illegal and all those aiding and abetting in this act are committing an offence. Is this not so?

The whole idea of having paid (mercenary) fire fighters in the CFA was supposedly for them to support the volunteers in their activities but it turns out that the small number of unionised members seem to think we are there to support them.

The fact is to have a mixed union and non union workforce is to invite disaster particularly if it is such an over the top demanding and bullying union like the UFU. Sadly even with the best intentions radical unionism and free thinking individuals will always clash when forced to work together.

As a returned veteran I know there is no place on the battlefield for unions any more than there is on the fire ground. As volunteers we fight 'till we drop because we are fighting for our lives and livelihoods and those of our neighbours wherever that may be. To roll over and quit before you are completely spent is not an option. We grab a feed if there is one and some ZZs when we can. To stop for either in the middle of a firefight simply because it's "in my award" is unconscionable. So is refusing to take orders from duly trained and accredited volunteer Crew Leaders and Strike Team Leaders, but that is the way of the union.

You can always walk away from a structure fire and be safe but you can never walk away from a wildfire as the outcome is usually catastrophic. It is the Vols who tackle the wild fires while the mercenaries usually perform asset protection.

From time to time the Government makes announcements of large amounts of money for the CFA but here in our brigade we rarely see any of it as it is obviously soaked up by top heavy management and administration. It is becoming harder and harder for people to get on courses, the very same courses we used to be able to run and manage ourselves within our own brigades. All the basic stuff like ,

Minimum Skills,
 Remote Structure,
 Class A foam,
 Salvage.Ventilation,Overhaul,
 BA-Search & Rescue,
 Driving Off Roads,
 Driving Under Emergency Conditions and, well the list goes on.

Now we have to bid and beg to get on these courses. except for Minimum Skills which, at the moment, we can still run.

Last year we had to pay an external provider from brigade funds just so we could keep up our First Aid Qualls.This year we have been told that the CFA will only pay for twelve members to be re-accredited. It seems to me the system that is " here to help you" is really more about job protection.

My brigade has built its own fire station twice then carried out extensive renovations adding an extra engine bay and office/training room and a separate workshop. We buy and maintain a Forward Command Vehicle and an Ultralight Tanker/Big Fill from time to time along with many other firefighting bits and pieces all paid for with money earned by the members. The last Big Fill costing in excess of \$180,000. Members of the committee you get more than fair value from us. Is it any wonder we are gobsmacked when we see the full extent of the unions EBA demands. They are beyond belief. How can a Chief Officer run an organization which is actually being run by Comrade Marshall.

Sadly despite those in charge claiming we will all work together in a harmonious manner to provide the expected services Comrade Marshall and his band have seen to it that this will never happen. The Mercenaries and Volunteers are like oil and water from different worlds and this combination can only continue to be a running sore. The lies and deception, The claims and counter claims. The accusations and counter accusations will never end.

Now two things need to happen.

Create FRV if only to separate the two parties and give the CFA back its dignity.

Ensure those who created this mess are publicly brought to account.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

I don't really want forgiveness for "those who know not what they do".

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