

[LCSC@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:LCSC@parliament.vic.gov.au)

Attention the Fire Services Bill Select Committee.

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to voice my concerns about the Fire Services Legislation which the Victorian Government has pushed through the Lower House and attempted to rush through the Legislative Council. I cannot fathom how the changes to the system will offer any improvement to fire services particularly in regional areas.

I am a proud CFA volunteer with the Alexandra fire brigades group and have been group communications officer for over 19 years.

I raise my concern as an experienced fire fighter with some understanding of CFA and its relationship with Victorian communities. Our area contains some of the highest bushfire risk and half of our group area was burnt out in the 2009 black Saturday fire

When (not if) another major fire event occurs will we have the capacity to meet the challenge? Or will it have been eroded because those brigades we depend on have been deskilled or sidelined because they are in FRV areas? Who is going to decide the budget for CFA and how much? Who is going to ensure volunteers get the funding for training and equipment.

One of my concerns is the motive for this new legislation and its potential effects on CFA Volunteers I don't understand why we need to split CFA up. None of the inquiries suggested it and the Bushfires Royal Commission actually praised the integrated model of paid and volunteers working together.

What is the motive for this dramatic change in fire services in Victoria? The Premier spoke about the stream of inquiries into CFA as a justification yet not one of these inquiries advocated for a restructure of CFA, indeed where CFA's structure was mentioned it was to support the integrated model.

Is this exercise nothing more than a very expensive strategy for Premier Andrews to sell fire fighting in Victoria out to the UFU?

Finally, considering Victoria is one of the most at risk fire regions in the world and that this legislation will affect every Victorian household, please consider these key questions,

1. **Do you believe that the Victorian community has been sufficiently consulted and supports this legislation?**
2. **Are you confident that this legislation will not harm CFA's surge capacity?**
3. **Do you believe that even with this short Inquiry that you know enough about this legislation to risk Victoria's fire safety?**

Thank you for considering my submission

I wish for this submission to be listed on the Committee's website.

Yours faithfully,

Rosey Chester

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