

District 20 Council Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria (VFBV)

Secretary

Bryan Pickthall



**To whom it may concern,
Upper House Select Committee Inquiry into the Fire Services Restructure.**

Some concerns/points we would like to raise with the proposed fire services restructure.

1. There has been no consultation; we believe there should have been.
2. How will the operational officers that are seconded back to CFA work under the Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV) EBA in a fully volunteer CFA? Will they work under the Chief Officer of CFA or the Industrial body's EBA?
3. Will the funding be adequate for the volunteer CFA as it is not adequate in the current system?
4. There are more questions than answers for many of us with this new structure and without answers it is hard to be motivated to work with so many unknowns.
5. Many volunteers are concerned about the way this has been introduced and morale and motivation is low.
6. How will paid staff and volunteers work together from the same station when there will be two different structures?
7. How will access to volunteer training be affected? Will we be able to train nights and weekends or will we be restricted to shift times under the EBA
8. How does this add more safety to the public of Victoria by only changing integrated CFA stations to FRV stations? Large Rural Victoria cities already have CFA Staff Firefighters operational for a fast turn-out, and this will naturally improve as these areas continue to grow.
9. Why is the Chief Officer answering to a CEO and Board and FRV answering to the minister?

10. CFA would be hamstrung to employ its own staff. All our OMs, OOs and training instructors are to be hired and managed by FRV and contracted (seconded) back to CFA. CFA loses all control over its future management culture.

Surely in this day and age two bodies like the CFA and the UFU should be able to work out an agreement suitable to both parties. For negotiations to drag on for three years is wrong, and it is only the issues that affect the volunteers and their dedication to their communities that is a concern. If this continues, the good relationship we have with our support staff will change, so we need to have some give and take, otherwise we will continue to lose very good officers, CEOs, Ministers, Board members and others who support the CFA, which until now has been a fantastic volunteer based emergency service supported by career staff. Please think hard and consult with all stakeholders before pressing ahead with this Fire Service Restructure.

Finally, why has the Cancer Legislation been included in the Fire Service change, as it should be a serious separate issue. Or is it to push the Fire Service change through on the cancer issue because there are foreseen problems with a smooth operation between the new Fire Service and Volunteers.

On behalf of the District 20 Council Executive and Volunteers

With sincerity,

Bryan Thomas Pickthall

Secretary

District 20 Council

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