

# Parliamentary Inquiry into the Firefighters' Presumptive Rights Compensation and Fire Services Legislation Amendment (Reform) Bill 2017

Victorian Government Submission (revised)

July 2017

# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Outcomes of the Bill</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Fire Services Operational Context</b>	<b>6</b>
3.1	Previous Reviews	7
3.2	Key Review Findings	8
<b>4</b>	<b>Key Components of the Bill</b>	<b>12</b>
4.1	Presumptive Rights Compensation	12
4.2	Fire Rescue Victoria	16
4.3	Fire Rescue Victoria Fire District	20
4.4	Volunteer Brigade Operations and Support	22
<b>5</b>	<b>Leadership and Culture</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Financial Sustainability</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Implementation</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Engagement</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Glossary of terms</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Attachments</b>	<b>40</b>

# 1 Introduction

The Legislative Council on 21 June 2017 appointed a Select Committee (the Committee) to inquire into, consider and report on the restructuring of Victoria's fire services, as contemplated by the Firefighters' Presumptive Rights Compensation and Fire Services Legislation Amendment (Reform) Bill 2017 (the Bill).

This submission seeks to assist the Committee by providing information, background material and the policy rationale for the matters outlined in its Terms of Reference.

This submission is structured so as to provide the Committee with information on the context in which the fire services currently operate, the extensive reviews undertaken in recent times, and how this environment informs the specific components of the Bill.

In addition to outlining the key components of the Bill, the submission provides information to the Committee on the crucial issue of organisational culture and leadership, including how the changes introduced in the Bill is a key prerequisite to the broader changes required to reset Victoria's fire services.

Finally, it informs the Committee on the steps that Government has taken and is taking on the important issue of engaging widely on the need for, and the impact of, these important reforms. As you will see in this submission, the Government has undertaken over 250 face-to-face meetings with volunteers, career staff and other stakeholders. These meetings have been crucial in informing work being undertaken in relation to implementation.

These reforms, and therefore this Submission, are couched in the context of a number of broad themes, which guided the policy decisions of the Government as articulated firstly in the Fire Services Statement (May 2017) and the Bill. These themes are:

- *Community safety:* The central goal of the Fire Services reform is improving the safety of all Victorians. It achieves this by putting in place a legislative and policy framework that underpins the development of a fire service that can more effectively respond to a rapidly changing environment. This framework includes; restoring the Country Fire Authority (CFA) to a volunteer firefighting service, providing governance arrangements to ensure Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV) has the appropriate leadership structures; creating a boundary setting mechanism that ensures Victoria's fire services can more effectively respond to the State's changing demographics and a pathway forward for addressing the significant cultural issues within the fire services.
- *Status quo is not an acceptable option:* There is agreement from all parties that 'do nothing' is not an option. The existing system design framework (static metropolitan fire boundary, intractable IR issues, poor culture, lack of diversity) all reinforce the need for a major system redesign. There is a growing sentiment amongst the fire services that the period for reviews is over and a clear strategic direction needs to be set.
- *Growing the CFA going forward:* The proposed fire services framework builds on the key features of Victoria's existing fire services model. Funding, volunteer training, equipment and operational capacity will all continue to grow, resulting in a CFA that is better able to respond to the dynamic operational environment that currently exists in

Victoria. This is about putting in place now, the foundations to ensure the CFA can continue as a leading volunteer-based firefighting agency.

- *Establishing FRV as the single operational organisation for career firefighters:* Provides for a modern urban career firefighting service, with all of the benefits derived from that, including a single operational enterprise agreement, an aligned career path and professional development for career firefighters.

In summary, Victoria's career and volunteer firefighters provide a remarkable service to the community. However, like any sector, be it public or private, the need to adapt to changing circumstances is ever present.

The Government looks forward to the recommendations from the Committee on how the proposed model outlined in the Fire Services Statement and the Bill can be further improved.

## 2 Outcomes of the Bill

The central goal of the Bill is improving the safety of all Victorians. Implementation of the reforms proposed by the Bill and the Fire Services Statement will provide the following outcomes for Victorians:

**CFA continues to be a strong and proud volunteer organisation, well-equipped with contemporary, high standard support, tools and systems.**

- A volunteer fire service able to focus on the critical task of building and maintaining volunteer capability and surge capacity (Fire Services Review).
- A volunteer fire service that is appropriately supported and resourced, including provision of training and skills development that is flexible and meets the diverse needs of brigade members wherever they live (Fire Services Review and Jones Report).

**Victoria's fire services are modern, with appropriate governance and management structures.**

- Reset the culture of the career fire services through the creation of a new fire service, Fire Rescue Victoria, where the relationship between staff and organisational leadership is based on mutual respect and collaboration, and the conduct of staff is professional and focused on community safety (Fire Services Review, Cotton Report and Lewis Report).
- Improve and modernise interoperability, operating procedures and other efficiencies between the fire services (Fire Services Review).
- Release Victoria's fire services from the constraints of perpetual industrial negotiation and protracted disputes (Fire Services Review, Cotton Report).

**Victoria's fire services are underpinned by a planning framework that supports an integrated, efficient and flexible sector.**

- Victoria's fire district boundaries are updated and relevant, with an independent fire district review panel established to advise on future changes. This independent, evidence based process will determine the appropriate service delivery model for any given part of the state, which focuses on the contribution and value of volunteer firefighters (VBRC Report).

**Fire services are staffed by world class career and volunteer firefighters that are well supported and reflect the community which they serve.**

- The state's firefighters are properly supported in the event they contract certain cancers attributable to the firefighting environment (election commitment).
- Fire services whose workforce better reflects the diversity within our community and promotes equity in the treatment of all (Fire Services Review, Cotton Report, and Lewis Report).

### 3 Fire Services Operational Context

- ***MFB and CFA each have a proud tradition of serving Victoria***
- ***The population of Victoria is growing and the environment in which fire services operate is changing.***
- ***The nature of emergencies that Victoria's fire agencies respond to has also evolved.***
- ***There have been eight different reviews into Victoria's fire services in less than ten years each recommending the need to change Victoria's fire services.***

*"The fire services have faced a number of challenges over recent years, which, despite their commitment to improvement, have started to drag them down. It is therefore timely to reset their direction and outline a path to a more positive future"<sup>1</sup>*

Victoria has a proud history and tradition of providing fire services to communities across the state for almost a century. Victoria has some of the best firefighters in the world.

In Victoria, public fire services are delivered by a number of organisations, namely the Country Fire Authority (CFA), the Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board (MFB) and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and its portfolio agencies. Under current arrangements, the CFA serves Victoria through a network of 1,220 community-based volunteer brigades including 35 integrated stations staffed by both career and volunteer firefighters. At the same time, the MFB operates in built up areas of Melbourne through a network of 47 stations staffed by career firefighters. DELWP and others are responsible for preparedness activities to reduce the risk and impact of bush and grass fires, as well as responding to all bushfires on Victoria's parks, forests and other public land.

For generations the skill and dedication of our firefighters, whether paid or volunteer has kept Victorians safe and saved lives. Victoria has a strong track record of fire services working together with other agencies to respond to emergencies including Victoria State Emergency Service, Victoria Police and Ambulance Victoria.

But as Victoria grows and changes, the demands on the State's fire services will continue to grow. These changing demands have been consistently identified by various reviews of Victoria's fire services.

In short: just as Victoria evolves, so too must Victoria's fire services.

<sup>1</sup> David O'Byrne, *Report of the Victorian Fire Services Review*, 2015 p 33; and Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board, *A Review of the MFB Employee Support Program*, 2016, p 6.

### 3.1 Previous Reviews

*“It is abundantly clear from the submissions to the Review that change is not only desired but desperately needed”<sup>2</sup>*

Table 1 shows the major reviews that have been undertaken into Victoria’s fire services over the last ten years.

**Table 1: Recent reviews into Victoria’s fire services**

Year	Report	Author
2008	Report on the Process to Select New Personal Protective Clothing for Victorian Firefighters (Lewis Report)	Judge Gordon Lewis AM
2010	Report of the Victorian Bushfire Royal Commission (VBRC Report)	The Hon. Bernard Teague AO et al
2011	Review of the 2010-11 Flood Warnings and Response (Comrie Review)	Neil Comrie AO
2014	Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry Report (Hazelwood Report)	The Hon. Bernard Teague AO et al
2015	Report of Inquiry into the Effect of Arrangements Made by the Country Fire Authority on its Volunteers (Jones Report)	Justice David Jones AM
2015	Drawing a line, building stronger services - The Fire Services Review (Fire Services Review)	David O'Byrne
2016	A review of the MFB Employee Support Program (Cotton Report)	Dr Peter Cotton
2016	Inquiry into the CFA Training College at Fiskville Final Report (Fiskville Report)	Parliament of Victoria Environment, Natural Resources and Regional Development Committee

These reviews reflect a decade of almost continuous review of the State’s fire services. In summary, these reviews in total consisted of thousands of pages of analysis, 309 recommendations and considered 2,276 submissions.

<sup>2</sup> David O'Byrne, *Report of the Victorian Fire Services Review*, 2015 p 33; and Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board, *A Review of the MFB Employee Support Program*, 2016, p 6.

## 3.2 Key Review Findings

### A Changing State

The population of Victoria is growing and the environment in which our fire services operate is changing. Victoria’s population has grown from 3.2 million in 1966, to 6.1 million in 2016. Victoria’s population is projected to increase by 4.6 million people between now and 2051, with growth concentrated in major regional centres and Melbourne’s outer suburbs.

For example, in one of Melbourne’s largest growth corridors in the city of Whittlesea, population growth in the suburbs of Mernda and Doreen has grown by more than five-fold over the past decade, and not unexpectedly, incidents have also increased. This is shown in figure 1 below.

Figure 2 over the page shows how Melbourne’s urban fringe has expanded beyond the current Metropolitan Fire District. In 1966 greater Melbourne’s population was around 2.2 million, while by 2016 it had reached over 4.6 million.

Population growth has not been limited to greater Melbourne. Figure 3 on the next page shows the change in population (as a multiple) in key regional areas from 1966 to 2016.

**Figure 1: Mernda and Doreen – Changing State**

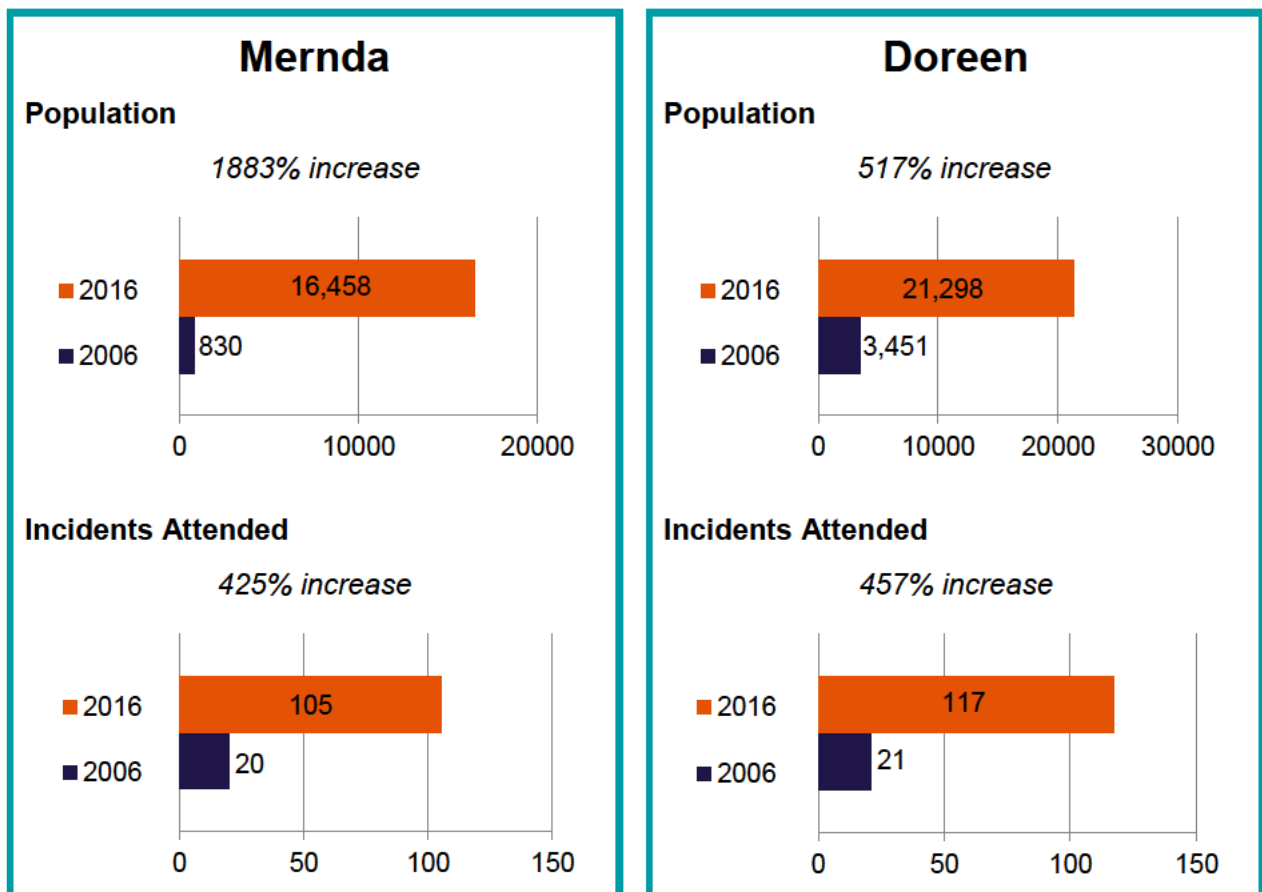




Figure 2: Metropolitan areas – 1966 to 2016

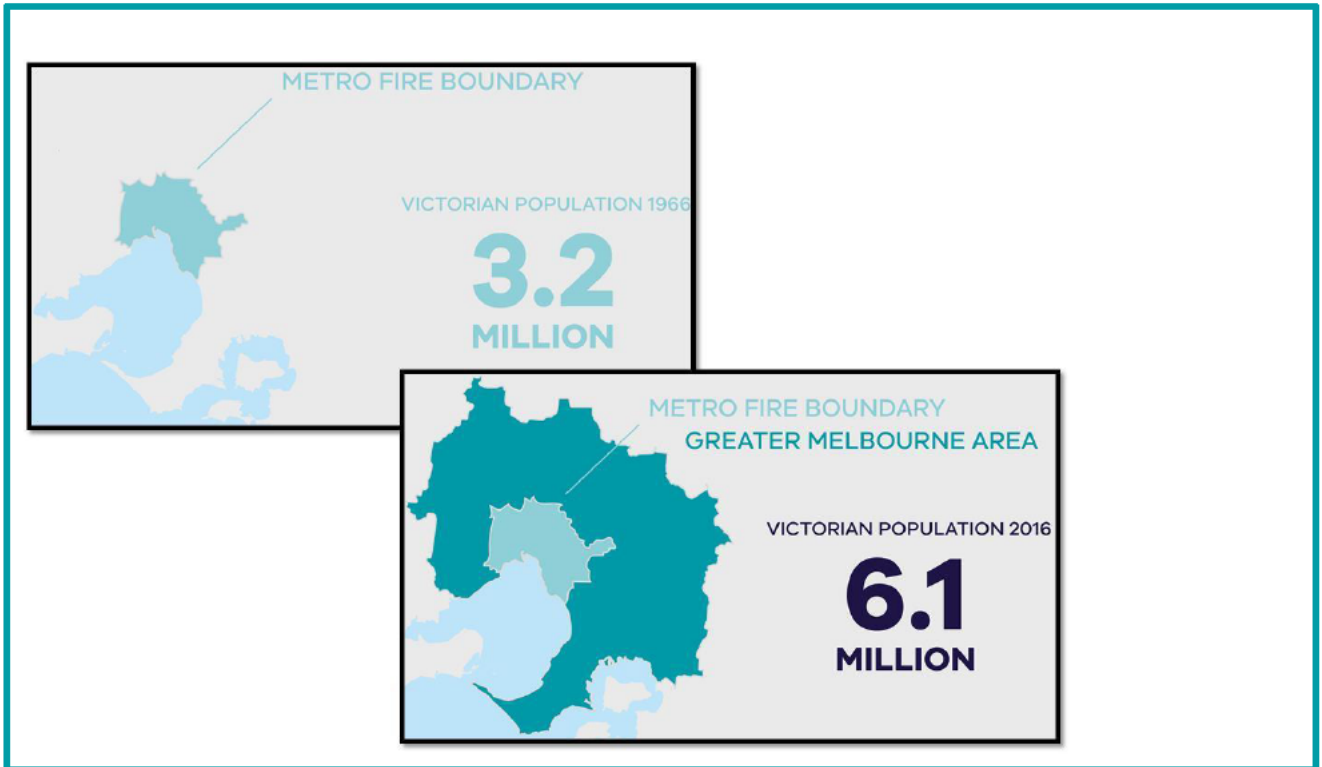


Figure 3: Regional areas 2016 – change in population (as a multiple) from 1966 to 2016



**Changing Risk Profile**

Victoria’s climate is changing, with 15 of the hottest years on record occurring in the past 16 years. Heatwaves are lengthening fire seasons, and bushfires will likely increase in frequency, intensity and affect more densely populated areas.

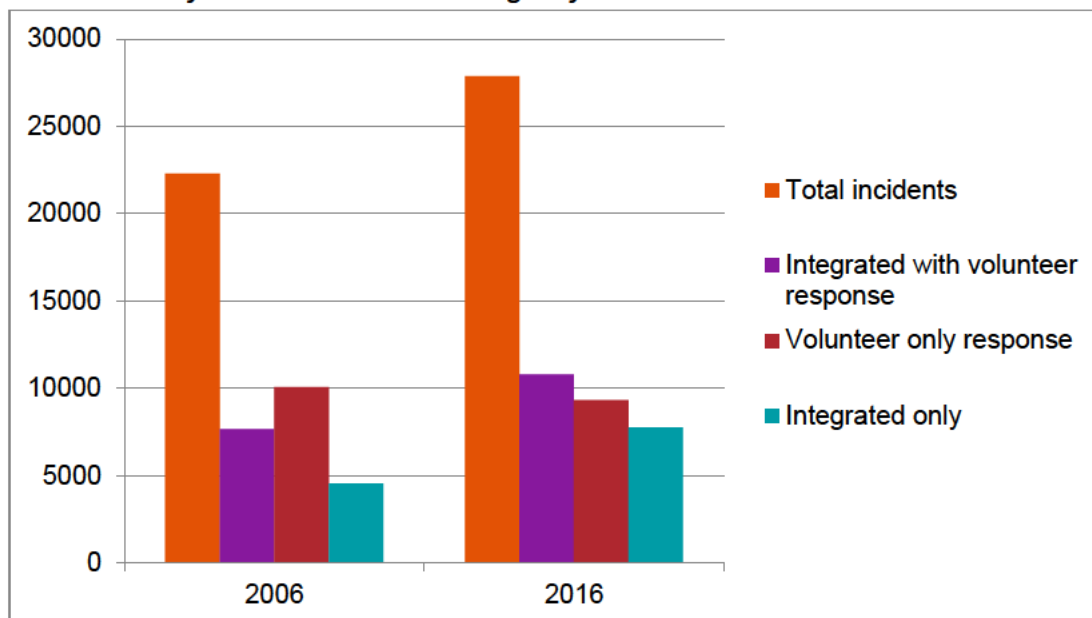
The nature of emergencies that Victoria's fire agencies must deal with has also changed. Urban fire and rescue services are at the forefront of managing the consequences of major incidents involving hazardous materials, public infrastructure, and terrorism. This includes assisting Ambulance Victoria paramedics during mass casualty incidents, dealing with fires and explosions, and performing rescues.

### Changing Operational Demands

Operational changes are also placing greater demands on the State's fire services. In 2006 CFA brigades attended 22,294 emergency incidents<sup>3</sup>. Over the ten years to 2016 this increased by 25 per cent to 27,859.

The number of incidents that the 35 integrated brigades responded to has increased significantly from 12,214 incidents in 2006 to 18,539 incidents in 2016, representing a 51.7 per cent increase. In 2016, integrated brigades were involved in responding to 66.6 per cent of all CFA incidents in 2016, up from 54.8 per cent of incidents in 2006, while volunteer-brigades attended 17,730 emergency incidents in 2016. In the decade to 2016, this increased by 13 per cent to 20,111.

**Chart 4: Analysis of CFA data on emergency incidents 2006-2016**



Source: CFA internal data

The reviews in Table 1 above, and subsequent recommendations, sought to ensure that the state's fire services continue to meet the needs of the community as those needs and circumstances change.

In line with these changes, community expectations around service delivery have grown over the past 10 years. Communities expect not only effective services, but also that the fire services workforce is representative of the communities they serve.

In summary, these reviews and additional data point to a need for decisive action by Government to implement improvements to fire services, so that the firefighters that serve our community so well are being supported by a modern, responsive and fit for purpose system.

<sup>3</sup> CFA internal data. Note: Emergency incidents are defined as Code 1 lights and sirens responses. Incidents in Chart 4 refers to emergency incidents.

## **Workplace Culture**

A range of workplace culture issues have been highlighted, including: low morale and lack of diversity, as well as a fundamental disconnect between management and staff. The Jones Inquiry and the Fire Services Review made a number of recommendations to strengthen culture and improve diversity in the fire services.<sup>4</sup>

Poor morale arising from protracted industrial relations negotiations was also highlighted. The Fire Services Review recommended a focus on restoring a cohesive work culture.<sup>5</sup> Both the Victorian Fire Services Review and the Cotton Review of MFB's Employee Support Program spoke about the significant stress caused to firefighters by ongoing industrial negotiations.<sup>6</sup>

## **Governance**

Outdated governance structures have resulted in a lack of direction and confusion regarding overall responsibilities in some areas. The Fire Services Review made recommendations to modernise legislation for the fire services and to reinstate the role of the Chief Officer as organisational leader.<sup>7</sup> The 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission recommended a process for reviewing the metropolitan fire district boundary.<sup>8</sup>

Issues with financial, project, resource and occupational health and safety management have also been identified<sup>9</sup>. The Inquiry into CFA Training College at Fiskville and the Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry made recommendations on improving health and safety management for firefighters and other emergency services.<sup>10</sup>

## **Interoperability**

Differences in CFA and MFB practices and equipment affect the ability of firefighters from each service to work together in responding to emergencies.

The Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission and the Fire Services Review both made recommendations on enhancing the ways that the fire services work together including standardisation of equipment, training and systems.<sup>11</sup> While there has been some progress, a number of these issues and recommendations have not been addressed. It is time to act to support our fire services and to keep all Victorians safe.

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<sup>4</sup> See David Jones, *Report of inquiry into the effect of arrangements made by the Country Fire Authority on its volunteers*, 2011, Recommendations 9 and 10; and David O'Byrne, *Report of the Victorian Fire Services Review*, 2015, Recommendations 6, 7, 8, 10, and 11.

<sup>5</sup> See David Jones, *Report of inquiry into the effect of arrangements made by the Country Fire Authority on its volunteers*, 2011, p 114; and David O'Byrne, *Report of the Victorian Fire Services Review*, 2015, pp 2 and 33.

<sup>6</sup> See David O'Byrne, *Report of the Victorian Fire Services Review*, 2015 p 33; and Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board, *A Review of the MFB Employee Support Program*, 2016, p 11.

<sup>7</sup> See David O'Byrne, *Report of the Victorian Fire Services Review*, 2015, Recommendation 13(a).

<sup>8</sup> See 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission, *Final Report*, 2010, Recommendation 63.

<sup>9</sup> See generally David O'Byrne, *Report of the Victorian Fire Services Review*, 2015

<sup>10</sup> See generally Parliament of Victoria, *Inquiry into the CFA Training College at Fiskville*, 2016, Recommendations 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12, 21, 22, 24 and 27.

<sup>11</sup> See 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission, *Final Report*, 2010, Recommendation 22. See also David O'Byrne, *Report of the Victorian Fire Services Review*, 2015, Recommendation 1.

## 4 Key Components of the Bill

### 4.1 Presumptive Rights Compensation

- ***The Victorian Government was elected with a commitment to introduce a presumptive rights compensation scheme for firefighters.***
- ***Career and volunteer operational firefighters diagnosed with one of 12 listed cancers from 1 June 2016 will be entitled to the presumption that this was caused by their service, provided they have served a prescribed minimum number of years.***
- ***Eligible firefighters will receive compensation under the WorkSafe scheme.***
- ***It is accepted that eligible firefighters will have been involved in operational firefighting roles.***
- ***The Bill provides a special consideration process, allowing firefighters who have not served the minimum number of years to be eligible if they have attended an exceptional exposure event.***
- ***An Advisory Committee appointed by the Minister will support firefighters' claims by assisting WorkSafe in answering volunteer attendance and exposure event questions, ensuring WorkSafe have all the facts available, irrespective of the fact there may be poor records.***
- ***An ex-gratia support scheme will also be established to assist those firefighters (or their families) who may miss out on the presumption due to timing issues.***

There is a significant body of evidence that suggests that, because of the work that they do, firefighters are more susceptible to certain types of cancers. In recognition of this, presumptive rights compensation schemes have been introduced for firefighters in other Australian jurisdictions.

Under a rebuttable presumptive rights compensation scheme, a firefighter claiming compensation for certain cancers doesn't have to prove that firefighting is the cause of their cancer. Instead, provided they have served a prescribed minimum number of years, it will be presumed that they contracted cancer because of their firefighting service and that they therefore have an entitlement to compensation. The presumption may be rebutted if the authority administering the compensation scheme can prove that a claimant's cancer was not caused by their work as a firefighter.

Victoria and New South Wales are the only jurisdictions currently without such a presumptive rights compensation scheme in place. The Victorian Government committed to introducing presumptive rights legislation within 18 months of its election. The commencement date of 1 June 2016 included in the Bill reflects this commitment.

Firefighters are currently entitled to compensation under the WorkSafe Scheme and the Volunteer Compensation Scheme administered by the CFA under the *Country Fire Authority*

Act 1958 if they have an injury, including a cancer injury, and there is evidence that the injury is due to their service as a firefighter. The presumptive rights scheme will reverse the onus of proof away from the career or volunteer firefighter, when they seek to access this compensation.

The Victorian presumptive rights scheme provided under the Bill will apply to firefighters in operational roles who are diagnosed with one of 12 specified cancers from 1 June 2016 onwards. It will ensure that firefighters with one of these cancers who have served the requisite number of years (5-25 depending on cancer type) will be automatically entitled to the presumption that the cancer arose from their work as a firefighter, unless the authority administering the scheme proves otherwise. The relevant cancers and qualifying periods are outlined in Table 2, below:

**Table 2: Relevant cancers and qualifying periods**

<b>Disease</b>	<b>Qualifying period</b>
Primary site brain cancer	5 years
Primary site bladder cancer	15 years
Primary site kidney cancer	15 years
Primary non-Hodgkin's lymphoma	15 years
Primary leukaemia	5 years
Primary site breast cancer	10 years
Primary site testicular cancer	10 years
Multiple myeloma	15 years
Primary site prostate cancer	15 years
Primary site ureter cancer	15 years
Primary site colorectal cancer	15 years
Primary site oesophageal cancer	25 years

Firefighters that satisfy the presumption will therefore have an entitlement to the existing benefits that are provided by WorkSafe under the WorkSafe Scheme. Volunteer firefighters will also continue to have the option of making a non-presumptive claim for compensation under the existing CFA Volunteer Compensation Scheme, but firefighters will not be able to receive double compensation for the same injury under the presumptive compensation scheme and the volunteer compensation scheme.

The listed cancers and qualifying service periods are consistent with the approach taken under Commonwealth legislation and other Australian jurisdictions which have introduced presumptive rights compensation schemes. The Senate **Education, Employment and Workplace Relations Legislation Committee** Inquiry into the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Amendment (Fair Protection for Firefighters) Bill 2011, which concluded in September 2011, considered a range of scientific studies regarding the occurrence of cancer in firefighters<sup>12</sup>. On balance, the qualifying years of service reflect the results of this research regarding the latency and exposure periods for these cancers.

The scheme will cover all Victorian career firefighters employed by MFB, CFA and FRV once established. It will also cover CFA volunteers. It will apply where a diagnosis occurs during the course of a firefighter's service or within 10 years of ceasing to serve as a firefighter.

<sup>12</sup>

[http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Senate/Education\\_Employment\\_and\\_Workplace\\_Relations/Completed\\_inquiries/2010-13/firefighters/index](http://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate/Education_Employment_and_Workplace_Relations/Completed_inquiries/2010-13/firefighters/index)

As Victoria is the second last Australian jurisdiction to implement a presumptive rights scheme for firefighters, the Victorian scheme has been designed with the experiences of the other jurisdictions in mind.

For example, the 10-year post-service limitation period is not unique to Victoria, as Tasmania, the Northern Territory and South Australia all have similar provisions in place. The reason for this is that the causal link between employment and a cancer diagnosis becomes more difficult to establish as time goes on, and the general likelihood of a cancer diagnosis increases as a person ages. It is therefore appropriate to include a post-service limitation period to provide certainty and ensure the scheme operates in a fair but cost-effective manner.

Consistent with other jurisdictions, it is intended that the scheme will apply only to firefighters that have served in operational roles. This is reflected in the definition of firefighting under the Bill, which means “exposures to the hazards of a fire scene, including extinguishing, controlling or preventing the spread of fires”. While it is assumed that career firefighters as defined under the Bill will have attended fires during the course of their employment, not all CFA volunteers attend fires. For example, the *CFA Annual Report 2015-16* states that 21,315 volunteers served in support roles, around 37 per cent of the total number of volunteers. A mechanism is therefore required to establish their operational status and help WorkSafe process their claims.

Tasmania, the Northern Territory and Western Australia all require volunteer firefighters to have attended a minimum number of exposure events to be eligible for the presumption.

Victoria has chosen to implement a more flexible test for volunteer firefighter eligibility, which requires firefighters to have attended fires to the extent reasonably necessary to fulfil their duties as a firefighter. This is broadly similar to the eligibility test under Queensland legislation<sup>13</sup>.

Experience in other jurisdictions has shown that some brigades may lack detailed historical records. The Bill therefore provides for the establishment of an Advisory Committee to provide an expert opinion to WorkSafe to ensure that if a volunteer firefighter is entitled to the presumption they do not miss out due to a lack of primary source supporting evidence.

The Advisory Committee is not a determinative body, instead its role is to provide advice to WorkSafe, and to support volunteer firefighters in establishing records and other supporting evidence on their claims. The Advisory Committee may take into account relevant records, brigade records, CFA data, employer data and local knowledge, as well as any other matter specified in the regulations.

Queensland has established a similar advisory body, but it has no legislative standing and there is no requirement for claims to be referred to it. In contrast, by requiring all volunteer claims to go to the Advisory Committee, the Victorian Bill ensures a clear and consistent approach across the board.

The proposed Victorian scheme also includes a special consideration process for career and volunteer firefighters diagnosed with a listed cancer who do not meet the minimum qualifying years of service. Such firefighters may still be eligible for the presumption if they can demonstrate attendance at an “exceptional exposure event”.

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/workers-compensation-laws/laws-and-legislation/workers-compensation-and-rehabilitation-and-other-legislation-amendment-act-2015/firefighter-provisions-2015>

The Advisory Committee will also provide advice to WorkSafe to help determine if a career or volunteer firefighter has experienced such an event (or multiple events). In doing so, consideration will be given to the nature of the event; whether there are any relevant findings from a coroner, any court proceedings or other official inquiry regarding an event known to have exposed firefighters to carcinogens, (and if so, the nature of the findings); and any relevant records, brigade records, CFA data or local knowledge.

Where a firefighter wishes to dispute a decision made in relation to their claim (including a decision to reject the claim), the WorkSafe scheme allows them to request conciliation of the dispute by the Accident Compensation Conciliation Service (ACCS). The ACCS is an independent body which will help to facilitate the resolution of the dispute using the principles of alternative dispute resolution.

If further medical information is required to resolve a dispute at conciliation, the ACCS may refer a medical question to the Medical Panel for a conclusive medical opinion. If the dispute cannot be resolved via conciliation, the firefighter may commence proceedings for judicial review of the decision in the Magistrates' Court or County Court.

Separate to the Bill, the Victorian Government will also introduce an ex-gratia support fund for those firefighters (and the families of deceased volunteer and career firefighters) who may miss out on compensation under the presumptive rights scheme due to not meeting timing requirements. This scheme is in recognition of the financial challenges faced by firefighters diagnosed with particular cancers.

**Relevant clauses of the Bill:**

- Part 2 – clauses 4-22

## 4.2 Fire Rescue Victoria

- ***There is a need to modernise fire services delivery and reset the governance structures and relationship between the fire services.***
- ***FRV will be led by the new Fire Rescue Commissioner who will have all the functions, duties and powers of Fire Rescue Victoria.***
- ***A Strategic Advisory Panel will be established to provide strategic advice to the Fire Rescue Commissioner.***
- ***FRV will provide operational and management support to the CFA.***

The establishment of FRV is transformative reform that will modernise our fire services. Significantly, it will:

- create a single, modern, urban career firefighting service, which provides major opportunity for profound operational, and organisational culture change and ensures a model that is prepared for future requirements of our changing state;
- provide consistent training and career paths for career firefighters, strengthening the career firefighting service across the state;
- allow for a single operational enterprise agreement, which will provide consolidated direction and control of career firefighters and consistent employment conditions; and
- provide an opportunity to reset the relationship between the fire services.

Successive reviews have found that the current structure of the MFB is at risk of becoming outdated, affecting its ability to fulfil its emergency management role. In particular, complicated and broadly dispersed leadership responsibilities have caused difficulties in responsiveness and coordination, and made accountability unclear.<sup>14</sup> These structures have also led, in some cases, to a disconnect between leaders within MFB and the firefighters who are on the frontline responding to emergencies.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, the Government is committed to introducing a modern, best practice governance model that will set clear roles, responsibilities and expectations for leadership and provide increased support and development opportunities for career firefighters.

While establishing a Fire Rescue Commissioner allows for clear lines of accountability and powers in emergency situations, the Commissioner will not work in isolation. A Strategic Advisory Committee will be established to advise on matters related to cultural change, future direction of FRV, workforce diversity and flexibility and risk management. FRV will have responsibility for all career firefighters. This will allow all career firefighters to be covered by the same training structures, have similar career progression pathways and have clear roles and responsibilities. It also has the benefit of creating a deeper and wider pool of more highly qualified career firefighters within the one organisation, including the ability to develop Level 3 Incident Controllers that can be deployed across the state.

<sup>14</sup> See generally David O'Byrne, *Report of the Victorian Fire Services Review*, 2015

<sup>15</sup> See generally David O'Byrne, *Report of the Victorian Fire Services Review*, 2015; and Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board, *A Review of the MFB Employee Support Program*, 2016.



It will create a flexible, adaptable workforce, who will be exposed to a wider range of emergency events in their day to day working lives. For example, former CFA career firefighters will have additional exposure to activities such as high-rise firefighting and former MFB firefighters will have additional opportunities to address landscape fires. All of this will lead to increased responsiveness and preparedness for emergencies and a more enabled and effective workforce. A new organisation will support the participation of staff at all levels to work collaboratively by establishing positive relationships, enabled by a leadership structure with clearly defined accountabilities and responsibilities.

Alongside the structural advantages of these reforms to establish FRV, the establishment of a new body allows this organisation to develop its own constructive leadership and organisational culture. The commitment of both former MFB and former CFA career firefighters to forging a new positive culture will be hugely important for this to occur. However, the crucial factor will be the ability of the new leadership group to respond to and implement the necessary changes.

The Bill amends the *Metropolitan Fire Brigades Act 1958* by renaming it the *Fire Rescue Victoria Act 1958* and abolishing the Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board and the positions of the Chief Officer and Chief Executive Officer.

FRV will be constituted by the new Fire Rescue Commissioner who will have all the functions, duties and powers of FRV. There is precedent in Victorian legislation for single commissioner governance models, most notably Victoria Police, but also the Victorian Electoral Commission, Commission for Children and Young People, Victorian Public Sector Commission and Essential Services Commission. Additionally, the single commissioner model is employed for the fire services in New South Wales, Queensland, Western Australia, and the Australian Capital Territory, as well as in a range of international jurisdictions such as the London Fire Brigade. Importantly, this model provides a single point of authority and accountability.

### **Equipping FRV**

Fire Rescue Victoria will be responsible for coverage of the Fire Rescue Victoria fire district (discussed in detail in section 4.3), which will expand to include additional suburban areas and regional cities covered by the 35 CFA integrated stations.

The Bill includes transitional provisions necessary to give effect to the new organisational arrangements for FRV and CFA, including a mechanism for staff and asset transfers, to ensure that when FRV commences it will be fully operational with the staff and assets it requires to keep the community safe.

Approximately 1,200 staff from the CFA will transfer to FRV under Schedule 3 of the Bill. This will include operational staff at the 35 integrated stations in addition to associated instructors and practical area drill operators who perform training functions. This transfer will be led by senior management of both organisations in consultation with the workforce and their representatives.

The Bill also provides a mechanism to allow for the further transfer of any required positions from CFA to FRV by Ministerial direction. The Government has confirmed that all operational staff will transfer to FRV. Any additional transfers of professional, technical and administrative staff will be based on advice from the heads of both FRV and CFA, and will be subject to the normal consultation processes with employees and their representatives.

Additionally, the Bill provides a mechanism for the transfer of assets from CFA to FRV, and for MFB assets to become FRV assets, to ensure that FRV has the infrastructure and appliances it needs to fulfil its statutory functions.

CFA will be required to prepare an allocation statement to guide the Minister's determination. Property, rights, liabilities and obligations of the CFA are to be transferred to FRV in relevant locations. The allocation statement will be subject to discussions between Brigade Management Teams and CFA's Chief Officer, and in consultation with Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria (VFBV) and volunteers. It will also be subject to discussions between CFA's Chief Officer and the FRV Commissioner, to ensure that both organisations have the tools, facilities and appliances to safely operate and provide vital community support.

It is important to note that equipment that has been purchased through fundraising and similar activities will remain the property of CFA volunteer brigades. In addition, the Government is committed to ensuring that no CFA co-located brigades will incur any immediate or ongoing costs associated with the new governance arrangements.

### **Support provided by FRV to the CFA**

The Bill creates a function of FRV to provide operational and management support to the CFA, making FRV responsible for supplying certain operational staff to the CFA. Clause 27 of the Bill inserts new section 7(1)(bb) as follows:

7(1) The functions of the Board are —  
 “(bb) to provide operational and management support to the Country Fire Authority;”

Once Operations Managers and Operations Officers become employees of FRV (under the staff transfer mechanism discussed above), a secondment arrangement will be established between the CFA and FRV to allow these staff to provide services to CFA.

These secondment arrangements are provided for by giving FRV the power to enter into an agreement or arrangement with the CFA under which officers or employees of FRV are made available (whether on a full-time or other basis) to the CFA.

A secondee will remain an employee of FRV and is not to be considered an employee of the CFA. The Bill expressly provides that these changes will not:

- empower the CFA to exercise employment powers (section 17 of the CFA Act); or
- impose a duty on the CFA (under section 18 or 19 of the CFA Act),

in respect of an officer or employee made available to the CFA on a secondment arrangement.

However, to preserve the chain of command, during their secondment secondees will be under the order and control of the CFA Chief Officer pursuant to section 27 of the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*.

Recruitment of secondees will be the responsibility of the Fire Rescue Victoria Commissioner, in consultation with the CFA Chief Officer, who will advise on the skills, attributes and capabilities required for these roles. A process will be agreed between the CFA Chief Officer and Fire Rescue Commissioner on a process to identify staff to fill operational management roles. A heads of agreement will be established to codify this process and ensure ongoing support and collaborative practice with respect to the secondment arrangement.

## Interoperability

Interoperability between emergency services organisations will continue to be a key responsibility of the Emergency Management Commissioner. There are well established processes for the monitoring and development of interoperability arrangements across the sector. These will continue, with CFA and FRV playing an important and ongoing role.

In addition, there will be a Heads of Agreement between the FRV Commissioner and the Chief Officer of CFA covering a range of matters including but not limited to shared service arrangements, secondments and measures to ensure ongoing support and collaborative practice at each of the 35 stations. This will be progressed following the appointment of the new FRV Commissioner.

Organisational performance will remain an agency responsibility with the Emergency Management Commissioner having responsibility in the Emergency Management Act 2013 to set standards. This will be a key to achieve interoperability and consistent service delivery outcome for both CFA and FRV.

### Relevant recommendations and review quotes:

*“The separate CEO and Chief Officer roles potentially create confusion. They offer different entry points into the organisation and potentially create a point of failure in decisions made pre- or post-critical incidents.”<sup>16</sup>*

### Relevant clauses of the Bill:

- Part 3: clauses 23 - 41

<sup>16</sup> David O’Byrne, *Report of the Victorian Fire Services Review*, 2015 p 42.

## 4.3 Fire Rescue Victoria Fire District

- ***Current fire district boundaries are outdated and have not changed since the 1950s.***
- ***The Bill renames the Metropolitan Fire District to the Fire Rescue Victoria fire district and expands the boundary to include outer urban and major regional centres.***
- ***The areas to be brought within the Fire Rescue Victoria fire district are those currently serviced by the CFA's 35 integrated stations.***
- ***The Bill establishes a Fire District Review Panel to provide independent advice on future changes to the Fire Rescue Victoria fire district, implementing Recommendation 63 of the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission.***

Melbourne, and many of Victoria's regional centres, have experienced substantial growth over the last decade. The reforms in this Bill will address the increasing demand, complexity and risk profile of these areas due to population growth, changing demographics and land use, and industrial changes. The nature of emergencies has also changed with urban fire and rescue services at the forefront of managing the consequences of major incidents involving hazardous materials, public infrastructure and terrorism.

The Bill renames the Metropolitan Fire District to the Fire Rescue Victoria Fire District, and expands the boundary to include the 35 CFA integrated station areas in major regional centres.

To ensure our fire services can adapt as Victoria grows, the Bill establishes an independent Fire District Review Panel to advise on future changes to the FRV fire district to ensure it remains contemporary. This is a key outstanding recommendation from the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission.<sup>17</sup>

The Fire District Review Panel will provide independent advice to the Minister based on a risk assessment of the assignment of responsibility for a given area, with the underlying objective to prevent loss of life, damage to property, infrastructure and protection of the environment. In making this assessment, the Panel must consider shifts in population, changes in service demand, the impact of changing land use, and any other circumstance that may result in a material change to fire risk.

The Panel must consult with all relevant fire services agencies and any local council directly affected by the review. In addition, as part of conducting a review, the Panel may consult with any person or body as it sees fit, including volunteer firefighters and their representatives.

On receiving the Panel's advice, the Minister in making a determination must have regard to a range of factors including fire services capacity, budget and resource implications, including the broader impact on the emergency services sector.

It is important to note that the Panel's recommendations and subsequent determination by the Minister may result in no change, change, or a requirement that a further review be undertaken in the future. This last provision allows for due consideration to be given to the potential for

<sup>17</sup> See 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission, *Final Report*, 2010, Recommendation 63.

further support to be provided to the existing volunteer brigade. This support could include a volunteer recruitment drive, new equipment or support as required.

The Bill proposes an independent and robust process for any future changes to the FRV fire district, by requiring the following:

- a review to occur once every four year period or by recommendation of the Secretary, Department of Justice and Regulation;
- an independent Fire District Review Panel to inquire and consult with all relevant fire service agencies and municipal districts;
- the Fire District Review Panel to provide advice to the Minister, which the Minister must have regard to;
- in making a determination, the Minister is to have regard to a range of factors including fire services capacity, budget and resource implications, including the broader impact on the emergency services sector; and
- the Minister’s determination is to be published in the Government Gazette and on the Internet site of Fire Rescue Victoria.

Members of the Fire District Review Panel (the Panel) will be appointed by the Minister, and will have expertise and experience in fire response and management, emergency management or other relevant fields. The Panel’s reviews will occur in consultation with fire services agencies and local councils, having regard to any change in fire risk.

This Bill requires that the Panel will not include any serving officers, employees or representatives of fire services agencies, industrial bodies or Volunteer Firefighter Brigades Victoria. This is to avoid any real, potential or perceived conflicts of interest.

**Relevant recommendations and review quotes:**

Recommendation 63 of the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission:  
*“...providing to government periodic advice on the metropolitan fire district boundary on the basis of triggers, frequency and criteria approved by government...”*

**Relevant clauses of the Bill:**

- Part 4: clauses 42 – 45.

## 4.4 Volunteer Brigade Operations and Support

- ***There is a need to reinvigorate CFA as a volunteer firefighting organisation and strengthen support to volunteer brigades.***
- ***The Bill inserts provisions to strengthen and support volunteers.***
- ***The Bill is supported by funding commitments outlined in the Fire Services Statement.***

Volunteers at CFA brigades provide an invaluable service to their communities, including vital surge capacity state-wide for campaign or other major fire events. These volunteers also have strong loyalty and connections to their local community and station, which the Government wants to preserve and strengthen.

These reforms will support the ongoing viability and growth of the CFA. The CFA has itself adapted over time to meet the changing demands for service delivery. It has progressively put in place a network of integrated stations that provide a team of career firefighters working alongside volunteers. This evolution of the CFA from a largely volunteer firefighting service to an organisation responsible for providing fire services to key urban and regional growth zones, has changed the “DNA” of the organisation. This has created significant operational and cultural challenges as the population continues to expand the organisation’s operational responsibilities. One of the core objectives of the proposed reforms is to reset so both the CFA and FRV can focus on more clearly defined operational responsibilities.

Volunteers at the CFA’s 1,220 volunteer brigades will continue to serve their local communities and will be supported and strengthened to do this through changes to the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958* by:

- adding an additional objective for the Board to support the effective and sustainable recruitment, development and retention of volunteer officers and members to deliver capability in the provision of the CFA’s services;
- explicitly recognising CFA as a volunteer firefighting and community based service, supported by paid staff; and
- support co-location of CFA volunteer brigades in the new FRV Fire District by enabling them to continue to operate within the FRV fire district.

Tailored support will be provided for volunteers at the 35 integrated stations where career firefighters will transfer to FRV. Importantly, the Bill provides for those volunteers to continue their fire service as part of a fully volunteer brigade.

CFA volunteer brigades located in the FRV fire district will be strongly encouraged to retain their brigade identity and co-locate at the formerly CFA integrated stations. The Bill provides that these brigades will continue to operate under the leadership of the CFA Chief Officer by providing additional powers that the CFA may exercise within the FRV fire district. In order to ensure the role of volunteers is not diminished, the Government is also investing in a volunteer recruitment drive.

### **Funding commitment**

The Fire Services Statement also announced a \$100 million package to support improved equipment, training and a range of other identified operational needs.

A dedicated \$56.2 million CFA Support Fund will provide additional brigade and volunteer support, improved health and safety measures, internet connectivity in rural areas, and more flexible, localised training. The final package will be informed by engagement with volunteers, VFBV, and the CFA Policy and Performance Consultative Committee. This Committee is currently undertaking work to assist in this process. The government will also invest \$44 million in an asset fund for the CFA

CFA has commenced a structured engagement process with volunteers at the 35 integrated stations and more broadly on the best way to invest this funding. This will be done in line with the CFA Chief Officer's statutory obligations to ensure the CFA is adequately prepared to maintain services during the transition.

The CFA Chief Officer will continue to oversee the provision of training for CFA brigades and will identify the necessary skills for firefighters based on the risks that they are responsible for. Additional funding has been provided under the Fire Services Statement to support more flexible, responsible and accessible training at a local level, consistent with past requests from the VFBV and volunteers more broadly. In addition, resources identified for information and communications technology (ICT) and internet connectivity in rural areas will boost new forms of training for these brigades, and the operational contribution of volunteers.

The Fire Services Statement also announced new funding of \$12 million over four years and \$3.2 million ongoing to establish and operate a new Emergency Services Infrastructure Authority (ESIA). ESIA will be tasked with delivering major emergency services capital infrastructure projects on time and on budget, which will put in place a system to manage ongoing needs of volunteer brigades.

ESIA will incorporate CFA and FRV projects within its first year, including relevant station upgrades and new builds from the \$44 million CFA capital fund announced in the Fire Services Statement.

**Relevant clauses of the Bill:**

- Part 5: clauses 46 – 52.

## 5 Leadership and Culture

- ***Improvements to leadership and culture have been recommendations of successive reviews.***
- ***Key changes under the Bill to establish FRV and restore the CFA to a volunteer firefighting organisation provide an opportunity for cultural change***
- ***As a new organisation, FRV will have the ability to create a new, positive culture.***
- ***The restoration of the CFA will provide additional support for volunteers so they can continue to make a meaningful contribution.***
- ***The Bill addresses only part of the reforms necessary to improve leadership and achieve cultural change, these are also supported by a range of policy initiatives as outlined in the Fire Services Statement.***
- ***The changes to the Fair Work Act prevent any CFA EBA from being able to be approved by the Fair Work Commission under the current industrial relations framework.***

One of the key opportunities arising from the Fire Services Statement is the resetting of the culture of Victoria's fire services, so that it better supports the firefighters who serve our community so well.

A number of the recent reviews into Victoria's fire services have pointed to negative workplace cultures within Victoria's fire services. This has included descriptions of bullying and harassment, a disconnect between senior management and operational firefighters, tensions between career and volunteer firefighters, and a lack of diversity. A key element in setting this culture has been the industrial relations framework, which both exacerbates and is symptomatic of these broader cultural issues.

These reviews also point to a complex set of relationships, many of which are strained, that impact on workplace culture. This includes relationships between management and operational staff and volunteers, between career and volunteer firefighters in integrated stations, between groups within the fire services (such as women and culturally and linguistically diverse groups) and between fire service agencies and broader stakeholder groups (such as employee and volunteer representatives and other emergency services).

While this does not implicate everyone, the issue does impact on everyone. This is primarily through the effect that workplace culture has over setting norms for people's behaviour, and the resulting failure to call out negative behaviours when they occur. The Fire Services Statement has strongly committed the Government to supporting cultural change, so that both career and volunteer firefighters, and those who work with them, are supported to carry out their fundamental work of ensuring community safety.

*"With the current state of morale and strategic and operational leadership, the fire services appear to be in an extremely unhealthy state; a situation that must not be allowed to continue. There has been a fundamental collapse in trust and goodwill. Significant change is required to create more harmonious fire services that work collaboratively with their key stakeholders."<sup>18</sup>*

<sup>18</sup> See David O'Byrne, *Report of the Victorian Fire Services Review*, 2015 p 2

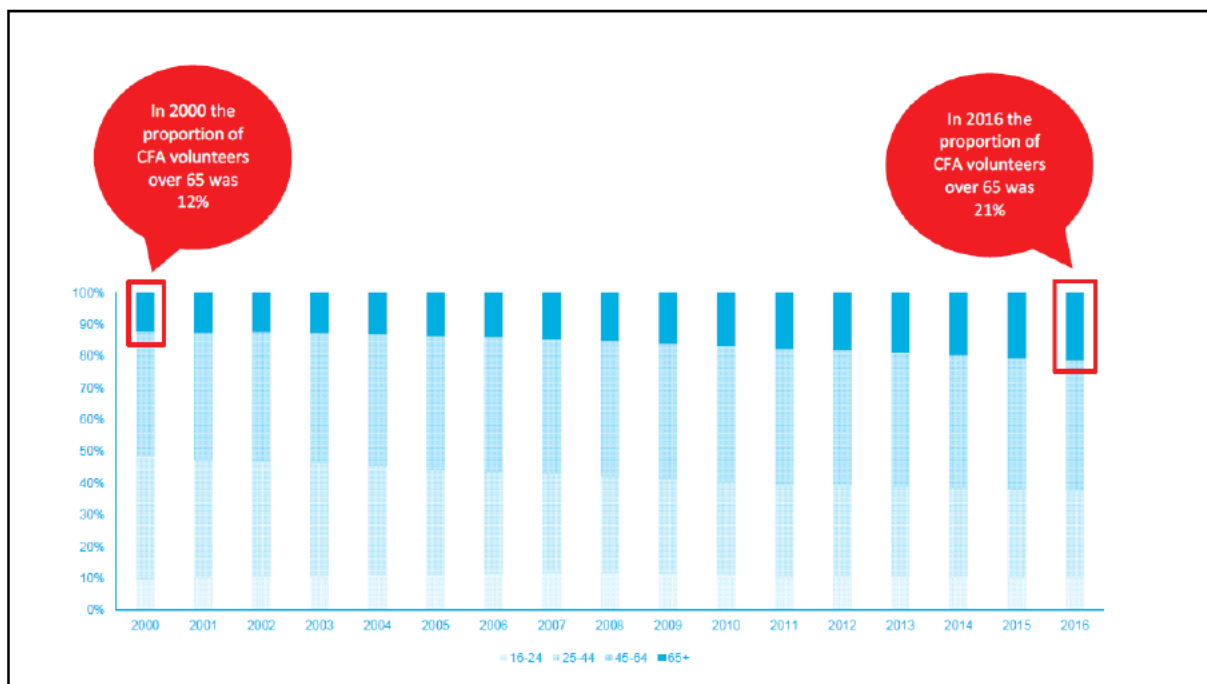


The importance of cultural reform has only been formally recognised relatively recently. For example, according to the 2011 Jones Inquiry, there were no organisational values or sense of an overarching culture. This Inquiry also found that volunteer firefighters felt unfairly treated and devalued in comparison to career firefighters, and that modern leadership practices were not being followed.

Another more recent review, the 2016 Cotton Report, found that work stress was having a negative impact on employees, caused by high tolerance for poor behaviour, lack of workforce diversity, non-inclusive cultures and the broader industrial relations issues and reputational damage caused by negative media coverage of these issues.

This is against a context in which Victoria's volunteer firefighter profile is gradually aging, with less and less young people joining their ranks. For example, as shown in figure 4 below, in 1999/2000 the percentage of CFA volunteers aged over 65 years old was 12.3 per cent. Over the past 15 years this had almost doubled to 21.4 per cent in 2015/16. As these volunteers age and attrition increases, coupled with escalation in the demand for emergency response, there is a risk that the overall capacity of volunteers will diminish. Further, if older volunteers are not being replaced, critical human capital in the form of local knowledge and experience will not be transferred. Young people will not be attracted to an organisation with outdated systems and structures. The CFA needs to be supported to provide an environment that welcomes the next generation of volunteers.

**Figure 4: CFA volunteers by age group 1999-2000 to 2015-16**



**Department of Premier and Cabinet: based on CFA data**

The proposed Bill addresses the structural reforms that will be necessary to support a leadership development and cultural change program, through the creation of FRV and the restoration of the CFA as a volunteer firefighting organisation.

The structural changes outlined in the Bill provide an important opportunity for the FRV to create a strong, positive organisational culture. Investing in the leadership group of this new organisation, as outlined below, will be crucial in allowing this to happen.

These reforms also give CFA the opportunity to grow and thrive as a volunteer firefighting organisation drawing on experience and expertise from the communities it protects, supplemented with operational and management support from FRV. It is clear from consultation and reviews, that many volunteers feel that they are not able to access the resources they require to carry out their roles effectively, and that opportunities for training and development are not occurring. The restoration of the CFA to a volunteer-based organisation, alongside new investments from Government in volunteer support, training and development, will address these issues.

Legislation alone will not create cultural change, as this happens alongside changes to formal rules and structures. Therefore, these reforms will be supported by broader policy and budget measures that have been introduced as part of the Fire Services Statement. These are outlined below.

### **Diversity and culture change program and diversity targets**

*“the numbers of operational women in Victoria’s fire services are particularly low and both organisations lag behind the state’s other emergency services in terms of women’s participation”<sup>19</sup>*

The Government has committed to a \$2.5 million diversity and culture change program within FRV and the CFA. This is informed by multiple reviews that have pointed to a lack of diversity within the fire services, and the need for strong action on behalf of relevant agencies to address this. In order for fire services to more adequately reflect the community they serve, these services need to take measures to support a more welcoming and inclusive culture and attract a broader pool of applicants. The details of this program will be developed in consultation with FRV and CFA.

A lack of diversity within Victoria’s fire services has been an ongoing issue, and while small improvements have been made, there is still a long way to go.

The Government has introduced strong and clear diversity targets in order to make changes to this program, that will be supported by the cultural change program and more targeted recruitment. These targets are to quadruple the number of female career firefighters in FRV from 100 to 400, and to increase the number of women in brigade leadership roles within the CFA to 15 per cent. These are ambitious targets that will require the commitment of organisational leaders if they are to be met.

### **Leadership development**

Appropriate support and training for CFA and FRV leadership will be fundamental to creating the cultural change necessary to improve Victoria’s fire services. This was one of the key challenges raised in multiple reviews - that leaders were not willing or able to support their staff to carry out their jobs effectively and in a positive environment.

The people who work and volunteer for CFA and MFB take on immense personal risk and sacrifice to ensure community safety. They deserve a workplace that is free from discrimination, bullying and harassment and leadership teams that respond to their needs and concerns efficiently and appropriately.

<sup>19</sup> See David O’Byrne, *Report of the Victorian Fire Services Review*, 2015 p

To address this, the Government has committed to a \$5 million leadership development program across both organisations. This funding is provided with the expectation that this will support values-based leadership, standard setting around appropriate behaviours and ramifications for negative behaviours, as well as genuine empathy and concern for staff, volunteers and broader stakeholder groups (including building relationships between fire services).

## Industrial Relations

The emergency services sector in Victoria (and across Australia) has historically faced challenges in an industrial relations context. Negotiations have historically been protracted, with the inevitable breakdown in trust that results from these types of disputes.

*The Fair Work Amendment (Respect for Emergency Services Volunteers) Act 2016* created a further layer of complexity and ambiguity that resulted in the finalisation of an EBA virtually impossible. This Act created a new unlawful term: an “objectionable emergency management term” (OEMT). The definition of and OEMT in Section 195A of the Act now defines “objectionable emergency management term” as a provision in an enterprise agreement has, or is likely to have, the effect of:

- a. restricting or limiting the body’s ability to do any of the following:
  - i. engage or deploy its volunteers;
  - ii. provide support or equipment to those volunteers;
  - iii. manage its relationship with, or work with, any recognised emergency management body in relation to those volunteers;
  - iv. otherwise manage its operations in relation to those volunteers; or
- b. requiring the body to consult, or reach agreement with, any other person or body before taking any action for the purposes of doing anything mentioned in subparagraph (a)(i), (ii), (iii) or (iv); or
- c. restricting or limiting the body’s ability to recognise, value, respect or promote the contribution of its volunteers to the well being and safety of the community; or
- d. requiring or permitting the body to act other than in accordance with a law of a State or Territory, so far as the law confers or imposes on the body a power, function or duty that affects or could affect its volunteers.

The Government has determined that retaining a volunteer and career firefighting workforce in the CFA makes it very difficult to create an enterprise agreement without OEMTs. A full legal separation of the CFA is therefore necessary in order to avoid the problems presented by the OEMT provisions. The alternative scenario is that the CFA continues without an agreed EBA.

There are a number of examples of clauses in the proposed EA which could be said to “restrict or limit what the CFA can do in relation to volunteers” and that a court or tribunal would likely find constituted OEMTs.

These are clauses which are associated with the day to day operations of the CFA and, putting aside the current industrial setting, cannot be easily altered from their current wording without jeopardising community safety. Clauses that relate to minimum staffing levels and the deployment of volunteers are vital for the safety of CFA staff and volunteers as well as the successful daily operations of the CFA.

Enterprise agreements in most other Australian jurisdictions contain similar clauses; for example a requirement for minimum staffing levels in stations and a requirement to consult on policies. These clauses have a strong precedent and are likely to continue to be important from an operational perspective, and incorporated in any future operational enterprise agreement for Victoria's fire services. The reality of the industrial relations issues faced by the CFA has created an impasse that will not allow it to move forward. As long as the CFA remains an integrated operational workforce an enterprise agreement cannot be approved by the Fair Work Commission.

### **Establishment of an Accord**

The 2016 Cotton Review of MFB spoke about the enormous stress and pressure being put on career firefighters due to protracted Enterprise Agreement negotiations, and resulting reputational damage caused by public comment on those negotiations. It was clear that a new relationship was needed between the leadership group and the industrial bodies who negotiate on employees' behalf.

An accord between FRV and the United Firefighters Union (UFU) will provide an avenue to create a new, more functional relationship. This responds to recommendation eight of the Fire Services Review, which calls for the leadership group to adopt "a genuine, collaborative and consultative approach in place of the adversarial win/lose dialogue." This will be a high-level agreement, that will allow the leadership groups of FRV and the UFU to develop positive cultural change and strengthen relationships within and across the fire services. This accord will also provide an overarching framework in which key issues such as the finalisation of the Operational EA can be undertaken.

#### **Relevant recommendations and quotes from reviews**

##### Fire Services Review

- Recommendation 6 (leadership tools to respond to negative behaviours)
- Recommendation 7 (increase diversity)
- Recommendation 8 (improve relationships between management and staff and representative bodies)
- Recommendation 11 (improve relationships between management and staff)

##### Cotton Review of Employee Support Program at MFB

- Recommendation 19 (increase diversity)
- Recommendation 24 (people-focussed leadership development)

##### Jones Inquiry

- Recommendation 9 (measures to support diversity)
- Recommendation 10 (measures to attract young people)

## 6 Financial Sustainability

- ***The combined budget for Victoria's emergency services in 2017-18 is forecast to be greater than \$1 billion, largely funded by the Fire Services Property Levy (FSPL)***
- ***The Fire Services Statement announced a \$100 million investment in new assets and support for the CFA. These initiatives were provided for in the 2017-18 State Budget, and are not funded through the FSPL.***
- ***The Bill provides for the policy commitment to ensure that the total amount collected through the levy will not increase revenue for the coming two years (2017-18 and 2018-19).***
- ***The costs of implementing these reforms will be minimal and provision has already been made.***

Based on the 2015-16 published annual reports, CFA's budget was \$567 million and MFB's was \$395 million. The MFB and CFA are largely funded by the Fire Services Property Levy (FSPL) which is collected by councils, and the State Government. The FSPL funds up to 87.5 per cent of the MFB budget and 77.5 per cent of the CFA budget from Victorian property owners.

The State Government contributes the majority of the remaining amounts of the MFB budget and of the CFA budget. Other sources of funds include commercial activities, grants and, for the CFA, donations.

The future operating budgets for FRV and the CFA will be determined during the implementation of these reforms. Budgets for both services will depend on the final FRV boundary but both services will be sufficiently resourced to undertake their respective roles. Budgets will be determined by the usual processes and consultations of Government.

The FSPL is collected in accordance with the *Fire Services Property Levy Act 2012*, which legislates that all Victorian property owners are liable for a financial contribution (via the FSPL included on their annual council rates notice charge) to the State's fire services.

FSPL is made up of two parts:

- a fixed charge; and
- a variable charge based on the property's capital improved value.

The fixed charge is indexed annually in accordance with movements in the consumer price index. This is prescribed in legislation.

For 2017-18, the fixed charge on residential property (including vacant residential land) is \$107 and the fixed charge for commercial, industrial, primary production, public benefit and vacant property is \$216.

Under the Act, the Treasurer is solely responsible for setting the levy rates. Section 12 of the Act provides that on or before 31 May each year, the Treasurer may determine and specify the levy rates by notice published in the Victorian Government Gazette.

When setting the FSPL rates, the Treasurer must have consideration to:

- the funding requirements of the MFB and CFA in the levy year in which a determination is to be made and any likely changes to the funding requirements of the MFB and CFA in the following levy year;
- any surplus financial assets for the MFB and CFA;
- any shortfall in the collection of the levy;
- the administrative costs of collection agencies in performing functions under this Act; and
- any other matter considered relevant to the proper determination of the levy rates.

The Treasurer is able to determine different levy rates based on the location and the land use of the leviable land. Currently, separate levies remain in the MFB and CFA areas in recognition of the different costs associated with funding each service.

The variable levy rates for 2017-18 are detailed in the tables below:

**Table 2: CFA Variable rates (cents per \$1,000 of capital improved value)**

<b>Property Sector</b>	<b>cents</b>
Residential	12.2
Commercial	99.9
Industrial	157.4
Primary production	24.8
Public benefit	12.6
Vacant (excluding vacant residential land)	46.7

**Table 3: MFB Variable rates (cents per \$1,000 of capital improved value)**

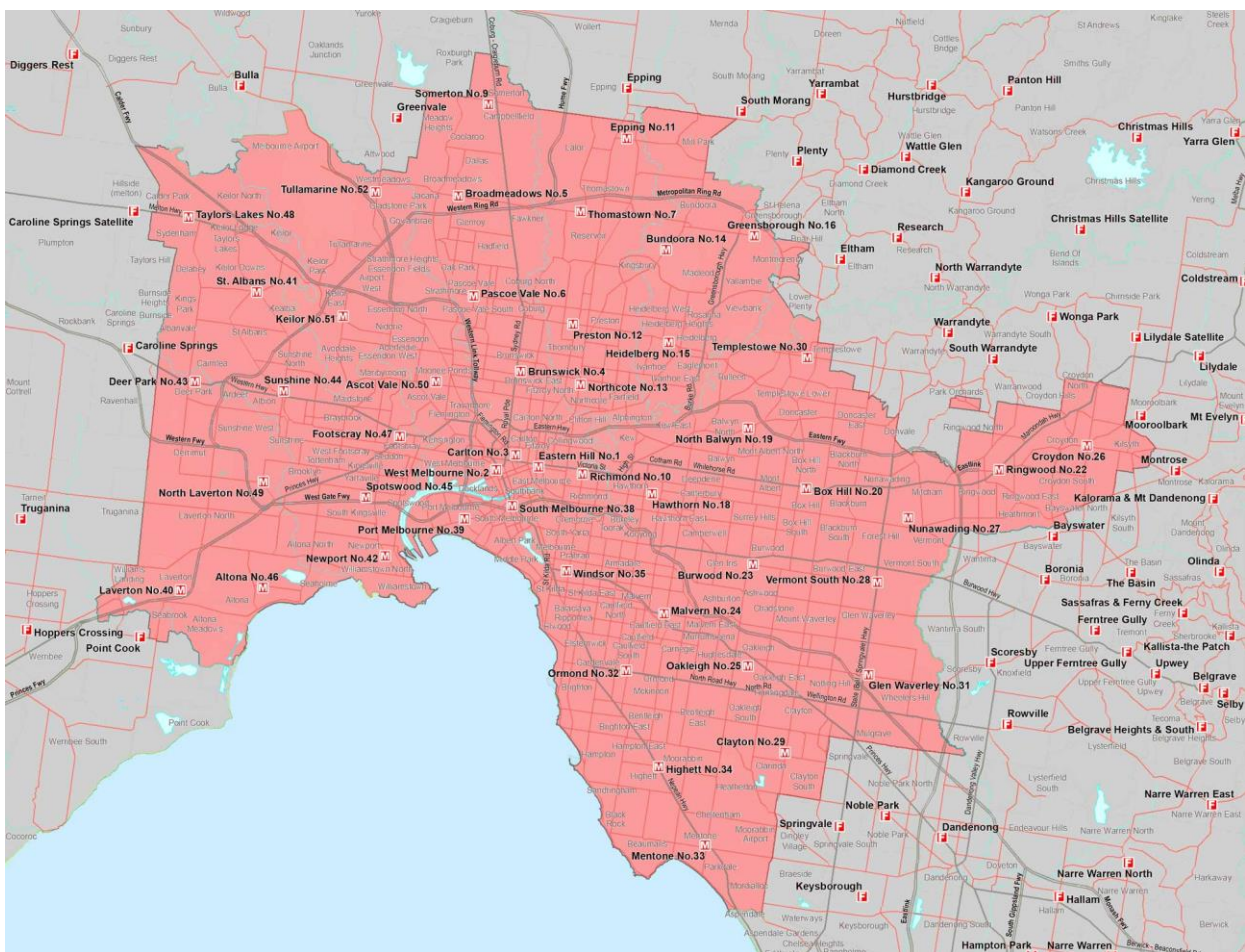
<b>Property Sector</b>	<b>cents</b>
Residential	5.6
Commercial	52.3
Industrial	81.5
Primary production	13.8
Public benefit	5.6
Vacant (excluding vacant residential land)	6.5

The Government has committed to not funding any of the reforms outlined in the Fire Services Statement through the FSPL. Fire and rescue services will continue as normal, and the amount collected through the FSPL will not change over the next two years while the reforms are implemented.

As announced in the Statement, the Government will invest more than \$100 million to support volunteer brigades with additional training, equipment and facilities. This is additional to the base budgets referred to above.

The existing Metropolitan Fire District boundary will remain in place for two years for the purposes of the FSPL (see figure 5, below) . FSPL arrangements from 2019-20 have not been decided upon, but the Government will continue to ensure the FSPL is raised efficiently and equitably to maintain the financial sustainability of the State’s fire services.

**Figure 5: The current Fire District Boundary**



## 7 Implementation

- ***The Government has the governance and operational implementation structures in place to fully implement the reforms.***
- ***Preliminary operational planning has commenced.***
- ***The final form of any implementation strategy will depend on the outcomes of the deliberations of the Select Committee and the passing of the legislation.***
- ***Decisions will need to be made to prioritise which reforms are implemented pre- and post-fire season***
- ***The Government is fully committed to ensuring that implementation is undertaken in a way that protects community safety.***
- ***The non-legislative elements of the reform will be implemented over the coming months.***

Without in any way prejudicing the outcome of the Select Committee inquiry and the response of the Government and Parliament, the Government is undertaking initial planning for implementation of the Bill. This reflects the fact that the forward work program to implement the fire services reforms is substantial and includes a number of major legislative, operational, administrative and community engagement work streams, again noting that key points of detail are dependent on the passage of legislation and subject to review.

It is appropriate for the development of new operational frameworks to sit with the CFA Chief Officers and FRV Commissioner, as this is part of their statutory responsibility. They are best placed to make these operational implementation decisions. This will be supported by new implementation governance as outlined below.

### **Governance**

Implementation of the reforms will be led by the Fire Services Interdepartmental Committee (IDC). The Terms of Reference for the IDC are included as [Attachment A](#). The roles of the Fire Services IDC include:

- provide oversight and policy guidance on the Fire Services Reforms, specifically on non-operational requirements;
- support the Government in ensuring that Fire Services Reforms are implemented;
- ensure overarching objectives of the Fire Services Reforms are achieved:
  - CFA continues to be a strong and proud volunteer organisation, well-equipped with contemporary, high standard support, tools and systems
  - Victoria's fire services are modern, with appropriate governance and management structures
  - Victoria's fire services are underpinned by a planning framework that supports an integrated, efficient and flexible sector



- fire services are staffed by world class career and volunteer firefighters that are well supported and reflect the community which they serve
- ensuring budget measures announced as part of the fire services reforms are distributed and expended; and
- providing an escalation point for the Fire Services Operational Implementation Committee regarding operational risks or concerns.

The IDC membership comprises:

- the Secretary DJR (Chair);
- Deputy Secretary, DPC;
- CFA Chief Officer
- CEO CFA;
- CEO MFB and Chief Officer MFB (transitioning to FRV Commissioner);
- Emergency Management Commissioner;
- Deputy Secretary, DELWP;
- and Deputy Secretary, DTF.

The IDC is supported by an Operational Implementation Committee (OIC), chaired by Mr Greg Mullins AFSM, a member of the Fire Services Expert Advisory Panel and the former Commissioner, NSW Fire and Rescue. The Terms of Reference for the OIC is provided at [Attachment B](#).

The Committee comprises:

- Mr Greg Mullins AFSM;
- Emergency Management Commissioner;
- A nominated leadership representative from MFB, then the Fire Rescue Victoria Commissioner upon the establishment of FRV; and
- Chief Officer (CFA).
- Chief Fire Officer (Forest Fire Management – DELWP);

With representation as required from:

- Chief Officer – Operations (VicSES);
- Chief Executive Officer (ESTA); and
- Chief Commissioner of Police (or delegate).

The OIC will oversee development of an implementation plan and comprehensive risk assessment supporting that plan which will ensure the continuation of an “all agencies – all hazards” approach to emergency management.

The reforms in the Bill provide the FRV Commissioner with the power to develop a new fire service organisation, and the CFA Board to lead the reinvigoration of the volunteer fire service.

## 8 Engagement

- ***The Government's reforms reflect the significant input from almost a decade of community debate and consultation on the future of our Fire Services***
- ***Eight major reviews since 2008, which collectively received over 2200 submissions from experts, firefighters, and the general public***
- ***Since the release of the Fire Services Statement and the introduction of the Bill into Parliament in May, senior ministers and fire services leaders have made in excess of 67 visits across the State to discuss and explain the reforms to over 2,600 volunteers and staff***
- ***At the same time, CFA regional leadership officers have conducted over 700 additional regional visits, reaching many more volunteers and staff***
- ***The Bill provides for ongoing engagement with staff and representative bodies and between agencies to support an orderly transition to the new fire services reforms.***

The Government is fully committed to a proper engagement process where people are listened to and valued, and where concerns are constructively worked through. The process of engagement has begun, including with the VFBV, the UFU and across volunteer, career and integrated stations throughout Victoria. Engagement will continue through the period of transition and implementation of the reforms.

### **Previous reviews and consultations**

A number of reviews have made it clear that major reform is needed. Looked at collectively, these reviews received over 2,200 submissions from experts, firefighters, representative bodies and staff and community members. These reviews were a key input into the development of the Fire Services Statement.

### **Post Fire Services Statement engagement**

Since the launch of the Fire Services Statement there has been extensive engagement with a range of stakeholders. Figure 6 (on page 37) shows that since the release of the Fire Services Statement, Ministers and the senior fire and emergency leadership have made in excess of 67 visits across the State, speaking with over 2,600 firefighters, volunteers and staff. A detailed list of these visits is included at [Attachment C](#).

These visits have been supported by providing the opportunity for discussion on the proposed reforms at routine meetings and a number of reform specific briefings held across CFA since the release of the Fire Services Statement. It is estimated that approximately 50% of CFA brigades have been represented at such meetings held since the announcement. This has provided the opportunity for a large number of volunteers to discuss the proposed reforms either directly with CFA staff or indirectly through brigade leadership who were briefed by CFA staff.

In an effort to achieve a state-wide reach the Chief Officer has maintained a strong social media presence, posting a number of videos to keep stakeholders informed and writing to every volunteer member. CFA has also provided a dedicated member information phone line and has regularly updated 'frequently asked questions' on its web site.

In addition to face-to-face discussions with volunteer and career firefighters, senior representatives of the Government have met a number of times with key stakeholders and representative bodies, including the UFU and the VFBV, since the release of the Fire Services Statement and the introduction of the Bill.

### **Consultation arrangements included in the Bill**

The Bill also provides for, and in many cases requires consultation to inform the implementation and operation of key components of the legislation. Examples of these requirements to consult include:

#### Transition arrangements

- An implementation timeframe for staff transfers will be developed by both organisations in consultation with the workforce and their representatives. In addition, FRV and CFA will continue to provide support across agency lines as required, including through shared service agreements and other heads of agreement in service areas such as protective equipment and communications.
- The Bill also provides a mechanism to allow for the further transfer of any required CFA staff to FRV by Ministerial direction. It is envisaged that some further operational management and related administrative support staff will need to transfer to FRV in the future. This will be based on advice from the heads of our fire services, and subject to the normal consultation processes with employees and their representatives.
- CFA is required to prepare an allocation statement to guide the Minister's determination. This will include both fixed and non-fixed assets. It will be subject to discussions between Brigade Management Teams and CFA's Chief Officer, and consultation with the VFBV. It will also be subject to discussions between CFA's Chief Officer and the FRV Commissioner, to ensure that both organisations have the tools, facilities and appliances to safely operate and provide vital community support.

#### FRV support to the CFA

- The recruitment of new Operations Officers (OOs) and Operations Managers (OMs) will be the responsibility of the FRV Commissioner, in consultation with the CFA Chief Officer. Recruitment will be informed by the Chief Officer's advice regarding the skills, attributes and capabilities required for these roles. The secondment model will be a key part of the CFA / FRV Heads of Agreement.

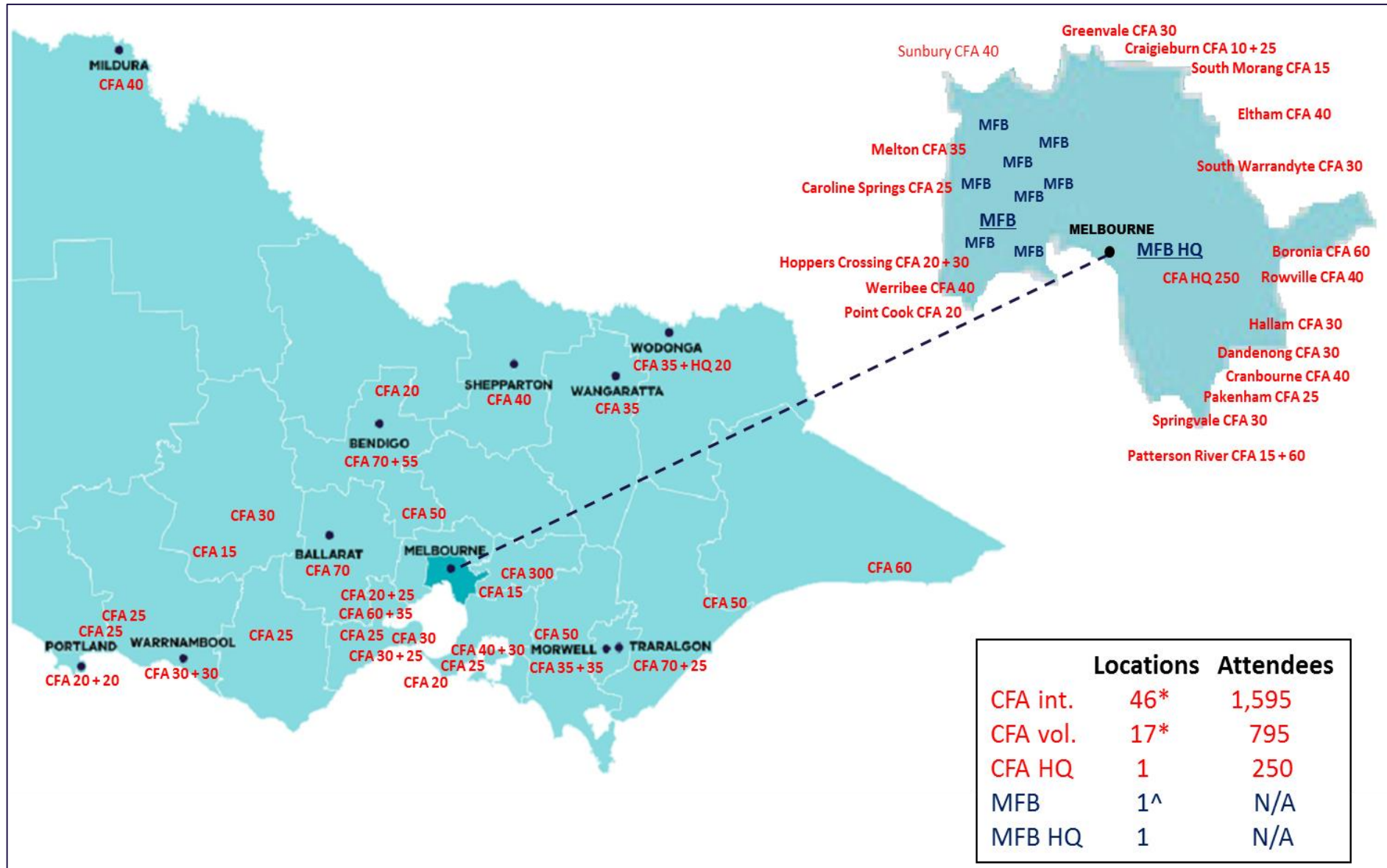
#### Review of the FRV Fire District

- Reviews of the FRV Fire District will be undertaken by the Panel at least every four years in consultation with fire services agencies and local councils, having regard to any change in fire risk.

## Presumptive Rights

- The Bill establishes an Advisory Committee to provide an expert opinion to the WorkCover Authority as needed to assist the Authority in its assessment. The Bill outlines matters the Committee must have regard to, including relevant records, brigade records, CFA data, employer data and local knowledge. These matters require a clear obligation to consult.

Figure 6: Ministerial and fire agency senior leadership visits



## 9 Conclusion

The proposed Fire Services reforms present an opportunity to respond positively to the need for change. The Government has come to the strong conclusion that the case for reform is now overwhelming.

The broader context of increasing fire and emergency response risk, a growing and changing state, and associated increasing demands on firefighters, coupled with a history of workplace culture issues, outdated governance structures and protracted disputes means that the Government cannot afford to wait any longer in taking action to reform Victoria's fire services.

In the end, it comes down to the safety of our community and the firefighters that serve them. There is broad consensus that under the status quo, our fire services will not be able to fully deliver the service the Victorian community expects. This is why the Government is modernising Victoria's fire services, to make sure they are structured in the best way to continue our strong history of protecting the community.

This package also acknowledges the risks to our career and volunteer firefighters. The introduction of a presumptive rights compensation scheme acknowledges the risks that they take when carrying out their work. The Government also recognises that safety is more broadly defined than physical injury, and that ensuring firefighter safety also means introducing the cultural change and leadership development required to create supportive and inclusive workplaces.

The implementation of these reforms will also be managed in a way that ensures community safety remains the number one priority. This is why we are talking directly to firefighters and other affected parties, and will continue to do so. The inquiry being undertaken by the Select Committee is a key part of this engagement and the Government looks forward to its findings.

## 10 Glossary of terms

Term	Definition
Brigade Management Team	A team of elected officials and appointed staff responsible for the management of a CFA brigade.
District Planning Committee	The body formed in each CFA district to oversee the planning of operational capability and policy for that district.
Emergency Incident	An event, accidentally or deliberately caused, which requires a response from one or more of the statutory emergency response agencies. Endangers or threatens to endanger life, property or the environment.
Enterprise Agreement	A registered agreement between one or more national system employers and their employees, setting out the terms and conditions of employment.
Fire Services Statement	A document outlining the Victorian Government's proposed fire services reforms, released on 19 May 2017.
Integrated Station	One of 35 CFA stations staffed by career and volunteer firefighters.
Incident Controller	The individual designated by the control agency to have overall management of the incident and is responsible for all incident activities.
Operations Manager	Delegated manager of a CFA brigade. They are responsible for the efficient and effective operation of these units, including the welfare and support of their members.
Operations Officers	Reports to the Operations Manager. This position provides guidance, supervision and support to volunteers and staff and coordinates the effective delivery of services to the community as an integral member of the CFA Area Team.
Operational staff	In the context of this submission is a collective term for Operations Managers and Operations Officers

# 11 Attachments

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# Attachment A: Fire Services Interdepartmental Committee Terms of Reference

## Fire Services Interdepartmental Committee Terms of Reference

### Purpose

The Fire Services Interdepartmental Committee (FS IDC) will:

- Provide oversight and policy guidance on the Fire Services reforms, specifically on non-operational requirements.
- Support the Fire Services Cabinet Taskforce in ensuring that Fire Services Reforms are implemented
- Ensure overarching objectives of the Fire Services Reforms are achieved:
  - CFA continues to be a strong and proud volunteer organisation, well-equipped with contemporary, high standard support, tools and systems
  - Victoria's fire services are modern, with appropriate governance and management structures
  - Victoria's fire services are underpinned by a planning framework that supports an integrated, efficient and flexible sector
  - Fire services are staffed by world class career and volunteer firefighters that are well supported and reflect the community which they serve
- Ensuring budget measures announced as part of the fire services reforms are distributed and expended.
- Provide an escalation point for the Fire Services Operations and Risk Management Committee regarding operational risks or concerns.

### Membership

The FS IDC comprises:

- Secretary DJR (Chair)
- Deputy Secretary (or delegate) (DJR)
- Deputy Secretary (or delegate) (DPC)

- Deputy Secretary (or delegate) (DTF)
- Deputy Secretary (DELWP)
- Chief Executive Officer (CFA)
- Chief Executive Officer (MFB) up to the time when Fire Rescue Victoria is in place, thereafter the Commissioner (FRV)
- Deputy Secretary (DEJTR - IRV)

## Observers and Technical Specialists

There will be an Executive Officer in attendance at all meetings to observe and answer questions when necessary.

Other observers and technical specialists may be invited by the Chair. These members will not have voting rights but may participate in discussions as needed.

## Meeting frequency

The FS IDC will initially meet twice each month and at other times as required. This is to be reviewed after 2 months of operation.

## Decision making

Decision making will be by consensus. Where consensus cannot be reached the issue may be escalated to the Fire Services Cabinet Taskforce for resolution.

All decisions will be minuted and circulated prior to the following meeting.

## Quorum

A quorum of the Committee is held by a majority of the members of the Committee.

## Reporting relationship

The IDC acts on the direction of the Fire Services Cabinet Taskforce. They will provide a traffic light reports on implementation to each FSCT meeting or as requested.

This will include any actions they have taken so far and any obstacles to implementing the Fire Service Reform.

## Chair and Secretariat support

The FS IDC will be chaired by the Secretary (DJR)

Secretariat will be provided by the Department of Justice and Regulation.

## Review of terms of reference

Terms of reference will be reviewed by the FS IDC as needed.

## Tenure

The Committee will have a tenure to 31 May 2018 or as determined by the Minister.

# Attachment B: Fire Services Operational Implementation Committee Terms of Reference

## Fire Services Operational Implementation Committee Terms of Reference

### Purpose

The Fire Services Operational Implementation Committee (the Committee) will:

- Develop a risk matrix and management plan, including prevention, preparedness, response and recovery, with a priority focus on ensuring there is no reduction in operational capability.
- Oversee operational implementation and risk mitigation activities
- Manage or escalate risk as required to the Fire Services Reform Interdepartmental Committee or the Fire Services Cabinet Taskforce
- Inform the development of heads of agreement between FRV and CFA with regards to matters including but not limited to:
  - Secondment Model
  - Shared services agreements
  - Maintenance of training and support to volunteers
  - Allocation of assets, including appliances and equipment
  - Inform the finalisation of budget allocations, including the \$44 million for CFA assets
- Provide advice on any other issue as directed by the Minister for Emergency Services
- Advise the Minister for Emergency Services and the Fire Services Taskforce on the readiness of the agencies to apply the reforms and any unforeseen requirements.

### Membership

The Committee comprises:

- Mr Greg Mullins AFSM as the independent chair appointed by the Minister for Emergency Services
- Emergency Management Commissioner
- A nominated leadership representative from MFB, then the Fire Rescue Victoria Commissioner upon the establishment of FRV
- Chief Officer (CFA)
- Chief Fire Officer (Forest Fire Management – DELWP)

Representation as required from:

- Chief Officer – Operations (VicSES)
- Chief Executive Officer (ESTA)
- Chief Commissioner of Police (or delegate)

Supported by:

Executive Officer (Ex-officio)

Secretariat (Ex-officio)

## Secretariat

The Department of Premier and Cabinet and the Department of Justice and Regulation will initially provide joint secretariat services to the Committee. This role will transition wholly to the Department of Justice and Regulation as soon as practicable.

## Meeting frequency

The Committee will meet weekly up to 30 June 2017 and at other times as required.

## Decision-making

Decision making will be by consensus.

Where consensus cannot be reached the issue may be escalated to the Fire Services Interdepartmental Committee for resolution.

All decisions will be minuted.

## Reporting relationship

The Committee acts on a charter from the Fire Services Cabinet Taskforce. They will provide a traffic light report on implementation to each FSCT meeting or as requested

The will include any actions they have taken so far and any obstacles to implementing the Fire Service Reform.

## Review of terms of reference

These terms of reference shall be reviewed from time to time by the Fire Services IDC and the Fire Services Cabinet Taskforce

## Tenure

The Committee will have a tenure to 31 May 2018 or as determined by the Minister

## Attachment C: Engagement on the Fire Services Reforms

Date	Government Attendees	Fire Station	Location	Stakeholder Attendees
19/05/2017	Premier, Minister Merlino, EMC, CO Steve Warrington	CFA - integrated station	Craigieburn	10
20/05/2017	Minister Merlino	CFA - integrated station	South Morang	15
20/05/2017	Minister Merlino	CFA - integrated station	Eltham - incl volunteer firefighters from Diamond Creek, Wattle Glen and Lower Plenty	40
20/05/2017	Parliamentary Secretary	CFA - integrated station	Patterson River	15
20/05/2017	Parliamentary Secretary	CFA - integrated station	Frankston	15
20/05/2017	Parliamentary Secretary	CFA - integrated station	Mornington	40
20/05/2017	Parliamentary Secretary	CFA - integrated station	Rosebud	25
21/05/2017	Minister Merlino	CFA - integrated station	Springvale - incl volunteer firefighters from Keysborough and Noble Park	30
21/05/2017	Minister Merlino	CFA - integrated station	Hallam	30
21/05/2017	Minister Merlino, EMC, CEO, CFA Frances Diver	CFA - integrated station	Cranbourne	40
21/05/2017	Parliamentary Secretary, EMC	CFA - integrated station	Traralgon	70
21/05/2017	Parliamentary Secretary, EMC	CFA - integrated station	Morwell	35
21/05/2017	Parliamentary Secretary	CFA - integrated station	Pakenham	25
21/05/2017	Parliamentary Secretary	CFA - integrated station	Dandenong	30
21/05/2017	Minister Allen MP, EMC, Maree Edwards MP	CFA - integrated station	Bendigo	70
21/05/2017	Minister Neville	CFA - integrated station	Ocean Grove	30
21/05/2017	Minister Neville	CFA - integrated station	Geelong City	60
22/05/2017	Minister Merlino, EMC, CO Steve Warrington	CFA - integrated station	Ballarat City	70
22/05/2017	Minister Merlino, EMC, CO Steve Warrington	CFA - integrated station	Melton	35
22/05/2017	Minister Merlino, EMC, CO Steve Warrington	CFA - integrated station	Caroline Springs	25
22/05/2017	Minister Merlino	MFB Headquarters	East Melbourne - MFB Meeting with executive	N/A

23/05/2017	Minister Merlino, Treasurer, EMC, CO Steve Warrington	CFA - integrated station	Hoppers Crossing - incl volunteer firefighters from Werribee and Wyndham Vale	20
23/05/2017	Minister Merlino, Minister Hennessey, EMC, CO Steve Warrington	CFA - integrated station	Point Cook	20
25/05/2017	Gavin Thompson, ACO	CFA – volunteer only station	Irymple	7
25/05/2017	Gavin Thompson, ACO	CFA – volunteer only station	Red Cliffs	9
26/05/2017	Minister Merlino, CO Steve Warrington	CFA - integrated station	Boronia	60
26/05/2017	Minister Merlino, CO Steve Warrington	CFA - integrated station	Rowville	40
27/05/2017	CO Steve Warrington	CFA - volunteer only station	Lara	20
27/05/2017	CO Steve Warrington	CFA - volunteer only station	Colac	25
27/05/2017	CO Steve Warrington	CFA - volunteer only station	Koroit	25
27/05/2017	CO Steve Warrington	CFA - volunteer only station	Port Fairy	25
28/05/2017	EMC, CO Steve Warrington	CFA - integrated station	Portland	20
28/05/2017	EMC, CO Steve Warrington	CFA - integrated station	Warrnambool	30
29/05/2017	Minister Merlino	CFA Headquarters	Burwood	250
30/05/2017	Trevor Owens, ACO	CFA – volunteer only station	Carrum Downs – informal gathering	20
30/05/2017	CO Steve Warrington	CFA - integrated station	Mildura	40
30/05/2017	Minister Merlino, EMC	MFB	Sunshine - incl Footscray, Keilor, Deer Park, Newport, Thomastown, Bundoora, West Melbourne and South Melbourne brigades	
31/05/2017	Maree Edwards, MLA, CO Steve Warrington	CFA – volunteer station	Golden Square	
31/05/2017	Tony O'Day, DCO, CFA	CFA - integrated station	Greenvale	30
31/05/2017	Minister Merlino, Mary-Anne Thomas & CO Steve Warrington	CFA - volunteer only station	Grisborne - incl local volunteer firefighters	50
31/05/2017	Minister Merlino, Minister Allan, CO Steve Warrington	CFA - volunteer only station	Huntly - incl local volunteer firefighters	20
31/05/2017	Minister Merlino, Minister Allan, CO Steve Warrington	CFA - integrated station	Bendigo - incl local volunteer firefighters	55
31/05/2017	Trevor Owens, ACO	CFA – volunteer only station	Moe – including Newborough, some discussion on FSR	4
1/06/2017	Minister Merlino	CFA - integrated station	Portland - informal meeting	20

1/06/2017	Minister Merlino	CFA - integrated station	Warrnambool - informal meeting	30
1/06/2017	CO Steve Warrington	CFA - integrated station	Shepparton	40
1/06/2017	CO Steve Warrington	CFA - integrated station	Wangaratta	35
1/06/2017	CO Steve Warrington	CFA - integrated station	Wodonga	35
1/06/2017	CO Steve Warrington	Headquarters	Wodonga	20
5/06/2017	CO Steve Warrington	CFA - integrated station	Morwell	35
5/06/2017	CO Steve Warrington	CFA - integrated station	Traralgon	25
5/06/2017	Minister Merlino, Rohan Luke, ACO, CFA	CFA - volunteer only station	Lara	25
6/06/2017	Gavin Thompson ACO	CFA – integrated and volunteer	Swan Hill – District 18 - District Planning Committee	21
6/06/2017	CO Steve Warrington	CFA - integrated station	South Warrandyte	30
7/06/2017	CO Steve Warrington	CFA - volunteer only station	Sale - District 10, 11 and 27	10
8/06/2017	EMC, Sonya Kilkenny MP	CFA - integrated station	Patterson River	60
11/06/2017	James Purcell MLC	CFA – volunteer only station	Heywood	30
13/06/2017	Tony O'Day, DCO, CFA	CFA - volunteer only station	Bairnsdale - local CFA Brigades from all Districts 11	60
14/06/2017	Minister Merlino, EMC, CO Steve Warrington	CFA - volunteer only station	District 13 - Monbulk	300
15/06/2017	CO Steve Warrington	CFA - integrated station	Sunbury	40
17/06/2017	Minister Neville, EMC	CFA - volunteer only station	Wallington - incl volunteer firefighters from Portarlington and Ocean Grove	30
17/06/2017	Minister Neville, EMC	CFA - integrated station	Ocean Grove - as part of Wallington visit	25
17/06/2017	Minister Merlino, CO Steve Warrington	CFA - integrated station	Geelong City - as part of Corio visit	35
17/06/2017	Minister Merlino, CO Steve Warrington	CFA - integrated station	Corio	30
17/06/2017	Minister Merlino, CO Steve Warrington	CFA - integrated station	Belmont	25
18/06/2017	CO Steve Warrington	CFA - integrated station	Craigieburn	25
19/06/2017	CO Steve Warrington	CFA - integrated station	Mornington	30
19/06/2017	CO Steve Warrington	CFA - volunteer only station	Dromana	20



20/06/2017	CO Steve Warrington	CFA - volunteer only station	Sale	50
20/06/2017	CO Steve Warrington	CFA - volunteer only station	Drouin	50
21/06/2017	CEO, CFA Frances Diver	CFA - volunteer only station	Werribee	40
21/06/2017	CEO, CFA Frances Diver	CFA - integrated station	Hoppers Crossing	30
26/06/2017	Bryan Russell, A/ACO	CFA – volunteer only volunteer	Moe	9
29/06/2017	CO Steve Warrington	CFA - volunteer only station	Ararat	30
29/06/2017	CO Steve Warrington	CFA - volunteer only station	Willara	15