

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees,

INQUIRY INTO THE FIREFIGHTER'S PRESUMPTIVE RIGHTS COMPENSTAION AND FIRE SERVICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (REFORM) BILL 2017

I write to you to express my strong support for the Firefighter's Presumptive Rights Compensation and Fire Services Legislation Amendment (Reform) Bill 2017.

My name is Brett Sleep, I am a Senior Station Officer currently stationed at Dandenong Fire Station CFA. I started my time with CFA in 1993 when I was 15 years old, joining as a volunteer at Tallangatta, in the North East of Victoria where I served for approximately five years and reached the rank of Communications Officer. I also worked for two fire danger periods consecutively in 1994/95 and 1995/96 with Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (now Department of Environment, Land, Planning and Water) as a project fire fighter. I became a career fire fighter in 2001, stationed at Frankston Fire Station for 10 years and later transferred to Dandenong Fire Station for the last 6 years. I am married with two children and we currently reside in Mornington.

I hold qualifications to operate Heavy Pumper, Tanker, BA Support, Breathing Apparatus (Open Circuit), Breathing Apparatus (Closed Circuit), EMR, Road Accident Rescue, Ladder Platform 42m, Teleboom 20m, and perform the roles of Strike Team Leader, Sector Commander Level 2, Operations Officer Level 2, and Incident Controller Level 2. I also hold the Certificate II in Fire Fighting, Certificate III in Fire Fighting, Advanced Certificate in Fire Technology (Swinburne University) and Certificate IV in Fire Technology (Swinburne University).

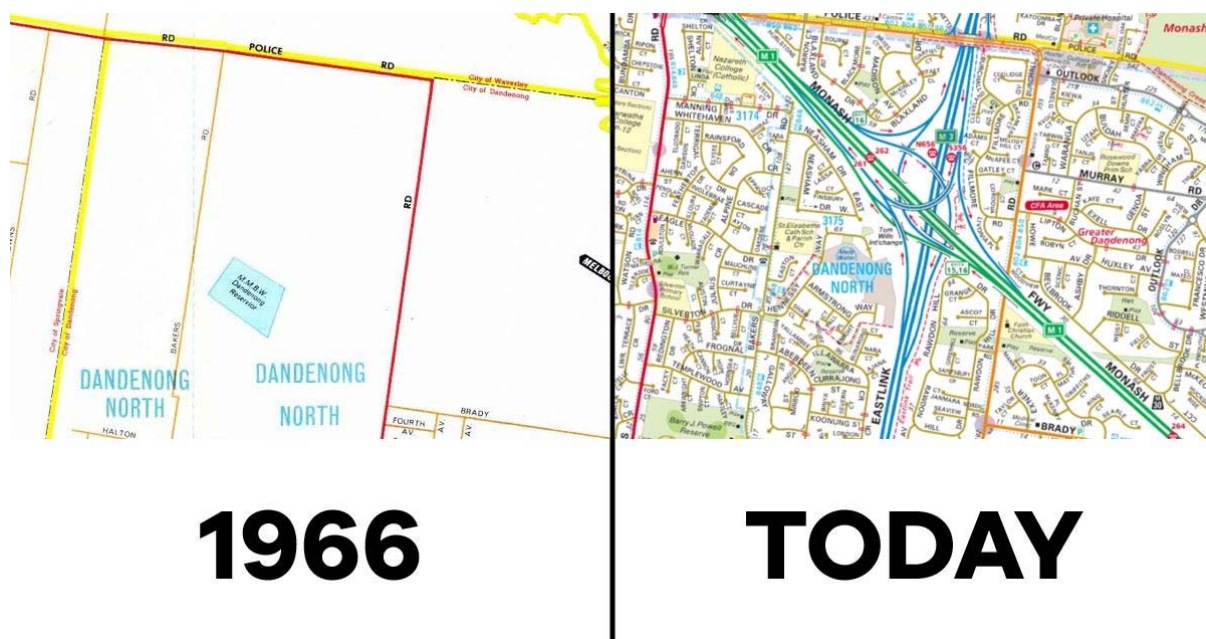
My current role at Dandenong Fire Station involves supervising and managing a shift of 11 people across both day and night shifts, and responding to emergencies as a Crew Leader or as an Incident Controller.

Dandenong Fire Station is the busiest CFA fire station in the State and it resides in what is described and legislated as the "country area of Victoria." Dandenong Fire Station averages around 2500 calls to emergencies per year (2486 fire calls year 2016/17), responding to incidents such as structure fires, non-structure fires, hazardous materials incidents (HAZMAT), emergency medical response (EMR), bush fire, road accident rescue (RAR), industrial rescue, trench rescue, steep and high angle rescue, confined space rescue, rescues at heights, alarms and many other differing types of public services. Dandenong Fire Station also provides personnel whom specialise in areas such as air and ground fire reconnaissance, fire investigation for urban fires and bushfires, Incident Management Team personnel working in Incident Control Centres, Staging Area Managers, and Peer Support personnel etc.

Dandenong has a vast array of risks such as hospitals, major freeway networks, a busy train line, major industry infrastructure, 4 out of the 38 Major Hazard Facilities within Victoria, rural/urban interface, large chemical storage depots, dozens of nursing home, over 400 alarmed premises and many high rise buildings. The Greater Dandenong area has a population of greater than 150,000 people which come from over 150 different nationalities. 64% of residents speak a language other than English. There are over 12,500 businesses consisting of a labour force of over 64,000 people. The Greater Dandenong area has the 12th highest crime rate in Victoria and has an unemployment

rate of approximately 12%. This is the make-up of an area that is deemed to fall within the “country area of Victoria.”

Below is a picture of a comparison between an area of Dandenong North from the Melways in 1966 compared to what it looks like today in 2017. It highlights the vast difference between when Dandenong was a largely unpopulated rural area in 1966, to current time where it is one of the most populous residential and industrial hubs in Victoria.



Being stationed at Dandenong Fire Station I am lucky to have many wonderful people to work with, both staff and volunteers. We enjoy a very healthy and respectful integrated station and I personally look forward to continue working with all of these people well into the future. Our integrated model though, is out dated where we no longer have a reliable volunteer group due to poor attendance at both training and at emergencies.

Dandenong Fire Station has 6 fire trucks (appliances) with only 11 career staff to respond them. This is insufficient crew numbers to crew and operate these appliances and other equipment effectively. Our skeleton crewing relies heavily upon our volunteers to support us and assist in responding all appliances. We currently have 63 career staff and 53 volunteer members at Dandenong. Only 23 volunteer members were operational this past financial year. The career staff do the bulk of the work and are supported by a small number of volunteer members whose numbers are weak when it comes to operational response. Our five strongest volunteer members (volunteers who responded to the most fire calls this past financial year) do not have structural fire fighting personal protective clothing (PPC) as they have not completed the training to hold the competency or qualification to wear a breathing apparatus or conduct a search and rescue, and few are endorsed to drive or operate any of the appliances located at Dandenong Fire Station.

The volunteer members at Dandenong Fire Station strive to provide a number of capabilities to our brigade, these being:

- Bushfire crews for hot day response and strike team duties during summer period
- Rehabilitation crews for long duration events and hot days
- Support crews to large incidents
- Road Accident Rescue support crews to RAR type events

The ability for Dandenong volunteers to perform strike team duties has dwindled over time due to people's commitments to work and family, and a lack of properly trained and competent members for drivers, crew leaders, scribes and strike team leaders. There has never been a time in my six years at Dandenong where I have witnessed our 53 volunteer members being able to provide the required four crew members for strike team duties on our Tanker. We have had to resort to trying to crew Dandenong tanker with four crew members from a pool of around 120 volunteers from Dandenong, Keysborough and Noble Park fire brigades. At times we have to recall a number of career staff on overtime duties to make up these numbers or to fulfil these roles because drawing from a larger pool of volunteers from three separate brigades still doesn't get 4 crew members. This is not what surge capacity is supposed to be.

Dandenong has a number of small transportable miniature shipping containers that contain things such as high expansion foam equipment, specialist rope rescue equipment, and rehabilitation equipment. Our volunteers are tasked with transporting these modules, with the exception of the specialist rope rescue equipment, to incidents when required. The rehabilitation module contains equipment to assist in managing personnel's health and welfare at long duration and hot incidents. There is bulk drinking water, hydrates, a shade tent, chairs with cooling aids etc. This is a critical support role for hot days. Dandenong is the only brigade in District 8 with this capability, yet unfortunately we can rarely muster enough volunteers to crew and respond this very important niche capability. More often we are required to respond Yellingbo Rehabilitation unit when our Dandenong volunteers fail to respond, adding an extra 45 minutes before this capability can be provided to the hard working, heat stressed fire fighters.

In terms of providing support at large protracted incidents, we are now seeing more occasions where fewer volunteer members from Dandenong are responding to assist, and when they do they are quite delayed and often do not have the skills or competencies to assist in any meaningful way. At no time in my tenure at Dandenong have I witnessed Dandenong volunteer members providing back up as breathing apparatus crews to our career staff whilst conducting internal fire fights and searches.

When I first commenced my time at Dandenong Fire Station the volunteers there were reasonably good at responding in a Road Accident Rescue support capacity. This support is now at a record low. Our volunteer members at Dandenong are struggling to find time to attend training nights. Attendance at weekly Monday night training is slowly dwindling to the point that the number of qualified Dandenong volunteer members in Road Accident Rescue (RAR) is at an historic low and this has resulted in most RAR incidents having no volunteer support at all, leaving the two responding career staff in a very difficult and stressful situation dealing with a traumatic scene with no qualified help.

We have only a few volunteers qualified to wear breathing apparatus or endorsed as drivers of the Tanker and Rescue Support appliances. Skills maintenance in these skills is a serious issue where a

number of volunteers maybe fulfilling roles that they technically no longer hold a current endorsement for.

Our volunteer members have allocated every Monday night for their training nights. But of the 52 Monday nights throughout the year, 18 nights are lost to Brigade meetings and public holidays. So this limits the number of training opportunities to around 34 times per year if our volunteers choose to take up these opportunities. They do their best to get to training, to get to community events, and to provide an emergency response to the community but this time and effort is getting less and less as time goes on. We can no longer rely on our station's volunteers to provide the back up to our skeleton crews in emergencies. This produces unacceptable safety issues with crewing numbers and operational ability. It limits how many hoses can be deployed quickly, it limits how many personnel can don a breathing apparatus and conduct an aggressive internal fire fight and search for occupants, it limits our ability to seek a reticulated water supply to guarantee a safe operation and achievable objective, and it produces risk that should not be there.

Dandenong Fire Station has three volunteer Lieutenants who are all allocated this rank by way of a brigade vote on a yearly basis. They are deemed to be leaders of the brigade. There is no formal training required to fulfil the position of a Lieutenant or Captain but they are afforded the same endorsement as a career fire fighter who has studied and trained very hard over many years to achieve their rank of Leading Fire Fighter or Station Officer level, and also endorsed as Level 1 Incident Controllers. Of the six years I have been stationed at Dandenong I have witnessed on only a one occasion where one of our current Lieutenants participated in command and control training. This last financial year our First Lieutenant responded to 23 fire calls (out of 2486), our Second Lieutenant responded to 9 fire calls (out of 2486), and our Third Lieutenant responded to 10 fire calls (out of 2486). The skills profiles relating to leadership roles for career staff versus those of leadership roles of volunteers is vastly different. Please refer to the attached list of comparative qualifications between career staff and volunteer members; it is very clear that our training is not the same and it is clear that our volunteer leaders are not leading by example.

Dandenong also has other fully volunteer fire brigades neighbouring it, being Noble Park, Carrum Downs and Keysborough Fire Brigades. All three fully volunteer brigades now reside in hugely populous and built up areas, littered with residential and industrial zones. All three fully volunteer brigades have serious response issues. Regular problems experienced with these three volunteer brigades are things such as:

- Volunteers responding "one up" – meaning only one fire fighter responding in the fire appliance
- Code 3 driver only – meaning that nobody is available to respond the volunteer appliance under lights and sirens to an emergency situation
- Awaiting a driver – delayed response as there is no volunteer available who is qualified and endorsed to drive any of the appliances code 1 or code 3
- Volunteers not wearing structural PPC to structure fires – generally because of a lack of skills and qualifications, or due to being a very new member with no experience

- No volunteer BA wearers – not qualified to wear breathing apparatus or conduct a search and rescue
- Reporting false turn out times – transmitting a radio message stating that the volunteer appliance is responding but it actually isn't (this is done to provide false Service Delivery Standards times and prevent the volunteer brigade looking bad)
- Delayed response i.e. slow turn out times and/or on scene times – often due to time taken for volunteer members to reach the station from home or work
- Cancelling career staff response prematurely due to parochial posturing – some brigades don't like having career staff come into "their patch" as it potentially makes the volunteers look bad - this is what we call turf wars

Ironically, as I have been writing this submission over the last couple of days I have been relieving at Pakenham Fire Station for two days and have experienced volunteer failures each day. We were responded to an alarm of fire at a Primary School in Clyde where Pakenham career staff were the support brigade and Clyde volunteers were the primary brigade. Clyde failed to meet their response time of 8 minutes and then later on responded one member ("one up") in a 4WD that has no fire fighting equipment, pump or water. The second volunteer failure within 24 hours that I experienced was to a structure fire in Bunyip, 23km out of Pakenham. This fire was approximately 200m from Bunyip fire station and Bunyip volunteers failed to meet their response time of 8 minutes also.

For the calendar year 2016, Noble Park volunteer fire brigade attended 119 primary incidents with a 75% compliance (25% failure) with the 90th percentile being 7 minutes 19 seconds. Keysborough volunteer fire brigade attended 31 primary incidents with a 53% compliance (47% failure) with the 90th percentile being 9 minutes 30 seconds. Carrum Downs volunteer fire brigade attended 135 primary incidents with a 52% compliance (48% failure) with the 90th percentile being 9 minutes 37 seconds. These Service Delivery Standard (SDS) statistics are in fact actually worse than this. If Dandenong or Springvale career fire fighter appliances get on scene first and then put a stop on the incident before one of these volunteer brigades has even responded, then this failure is not counted. The fire report for the volunteer brigade is deleted and transferred to either Dandenong or Springvale and this systemic failure is essentially hidden from view.

Essentially, this means that there are some severe failures in the current CFA system that at times mean when someone from the community calls 000 for an emergency, certain fire trucks either do not respond, have a delayed response, or respond with inexperienced, ill-equipped and unqualified volunteer personnel. This places the community at a greater risk than it needs to be. Additionally, the career fire fighters that rely on these three volunteer brigades are also placed at greater risk than we need to be. We regularly work in dangerous situations without the back-up we expect and deserve and without the equipment that we need to make our jobs safer. I have at times completed CFA Safe hazard reports for these failures, but CFA management have never met their obligation to reply to me or discuss these safety issues.

I have had to respond to house fires as a crew of just two career fire fighters and conduct an internal fire fight without the primary volunteer brigade turning up to assist. I had a roof collapse on me when I was the only fire fighter inside a house fire and I had no volunteer support to help me. Thankfully I was able to get back up onto my feet and retreat to a safer area.

As in Incident Controller, I have formulated plans to combat incidents only to have those plans thrown out the window because the volunteer support brigade failed to respond or had a significant delay. I have responded to a fire literally right next door to Noble Park fire station where they failed to respond within the required 8 minutes. When a fire truck was eventually responded from Noble Park fire station it was with only one person. During that same couple of weeks, Dandenong responded to a number of fires and incidents on the same street as Noble Park fire station and within two blocks of this station, where they failed entirely to respond an appliance.

The frequencies of these types of failures is endless, and has reached the point now where my size-up and corresponding actions as an Incident Controller does not even factor in the attendance of any of the three volunteer fire brigades that surround Dandenong. If they happen to turn up then it is a bonus. I regularly monitor the computerised Incident Management System that displays all CFA incidents State-wide. Most days there is an incident where the appropriate and expected emergency response from CFA is not met.

Formation of Fire Rescue Victoria will enable safer systems of work where a guarantee of multiple appliances will be dispatched to serve the community and the fire fighters who protect them. Also, areas where volunteer brigades are struggling to meet community expectations will be monitored by an independent panel who can offer support and assistance where needed. If this fails to provide an improvement to acceptable levels then this independent panel can justifiably recommend additional fire fighting resources for these areas. Again, this removes the politics and addresses the real needs of the community.

Dandenong fire station has a number of personnel with specialist skills in rope rescue for both steep angle and high angle rescues i.e. cliff top rescues and high rise building rescues, trench rescue and confined space rescue. The CFA specialist response system is an embarrassing system. There is no dedicated department to manage this expert field and there are no dedicated crews rostered on to provide 24/7 response capability allocated to specialist appliances with the appropriate equipment. Instead, when a specialist response incident is activated, crews are responded from many different stations across multiple Districts. These crews leave their allocated stations and appliances and respond long distances at times. This then leaves a number of stations and appliances short of crew and often results in appliances being taken out of commission for long periods of time. At Dandenong we are forced to take the \$1.5m Ladder Platform offline. Forming Fire Rescue Victoria will enable CFA specialist response crews to be structured and responded in a more organised fashion and allow properly coordinated departments to be formed.

The presumptive rights component of the Bill is long overdue. I trained numerous times at Fiskville Training College, at times for months on end. It concerns me deeply at the prevalence of illnesses people are suffering or have suffered and the constant worry about whether I will develop any serious health issues as a result of spending time at Fiskville. The regular exposure to so many toxic and carcinogenic substances as a result of my occupation is another reason that this presumptive legislation is so important. We endeavour to protect ourselves to the very best that we can by wearing our protective personal clothing and protective equipment properly and cleaning it regularly, limiting our exposure to toxic smoke and vapours and other nasty by-products of fire, but inevitably we cannot avoid it completely, so our risk of ill health as a result of our chosen profession is high. By passing the presumptive legislation it would be reassuring to know that at least our

families will be taken care of if something horrible does occur as a result of these exposures during our work

I have been a career fire fighter for over 16 years now. Sadly every few years the renegotiation for our Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) comes around and unfortunately it always turns into a political war and industrial dispute causing great strain for career staff. Some disputes are relatively restrained, but in this particular battle it has become an agonising and cruel situation for career fire fighters. The VFBV spread fear amongst our volunteers every time an EBA is being negotiated. I have attached two letters from the VFBV, one from 2006 and another from 2010, when the previous EBAs were being negotiated. Apparently it was the end of CFA each time in those eras too.

The strain, the emotional stress and anger that this protracted dispute has caused is irreversible. The tension and animosity between career staff and volunteers is tremendous. The pressure it has put on our families is unfair. This cannot be the norm. This cannot be a cyclic war anymore. These dirty wars are not in the best interests of the career fire fighters, the volunteers, the community, the politicians or any of the Fire Services. Negotiating pay and conditions should not be an impossible task, nor should it be a public spectacle. Being part of a Union should not allow people label me and my professional colleagues as “thugs”, “terrorists”, “scabs”, “standover men”, “knuckleheads”, “stooges”, “bullies” and “drones.” This repulsive and offensive rhetoric has come from some of our fellow volunteers, some State and Federal politicians, some media outlets and many on social media hiding behind fake accounts. I watch the news and read the newspapers and see the media label murderers, gang members and armed robbers as thugs, and I feel sick to the stomach to think that some people in privileged positions put my colleagues and I in the same category as these criminals, simply because we chose to become professional fire fighters and because we chose to be a part of a Union that supports our welfare and livelihoods. I am ashamed! With morale at an all time low, and anger and conflict at such dangerously high levels now, I fear for what will happen to CFA if this Bill does not get passed.

I have family and friends living all across Victoria. I have family and friends who are CFA volunteers. If I thought for a second that this Bill was going to affect their communities, their local CFA brigades or their safety, then I would not support it. But this Bill will not be detrimental to my family and friends and the communities they reside in. As a former volunteer I understand that volunteers feel the need to participate and to be included. This, coupled with tradition and history should not be used as an excuse to prevent modernisation and change for the better of the community and the people who protect our communities.

The response and systemic problems CFA are facing are not the fault of our volunteers. Poor management, an outdated and archaic Fire Services structure, a fast growing State and turf wars are the root cause. Our volunteers are good people, but they are struggling. This is simply a real sign of the times that we are in and what CFA has evolved into at most of our integrated and fully volunteer stations. Our State continues to grow at a rapid rate, people’s work lives and home lives are getting busier and more stressful. Generational groups don’t want to volunteer anymore, businesses don’t want to let their employees go and volunteer for too long anymore, people simply don’t have the time to commit to training anymore, and of course, call rates for fire stations are growing and growing which is leading to volunteers getting worn out.

The introduction of Fire Rescue Victoria can achieve the following:

- Modernise the Fire Services in Victoria by placing all professional career fire fighters into one organisation meeting the same legislative requirements and using the same Standing Orders, Standard Operating Procedures, Fire Ground Practices and skills acquisition and maintenance structure. This streamlines recruitment, training and fire ground operations and provides for the ability to establish properly structured and funded departments for specialised areas that have been neglected for decades.
- Ensuring adequate response to emergencies in the Greater Metropolitan Areas of Victoria with sufficient fire fighting appliances and equipment, crewed by fully professional and appropriately trained personnel. This will save lives and better protect properties by containing fires and other hazards more quickly. This will also provide a safer fire ground for fire fighters by enabling safer operations.
- Ensuring a proper strategy for Fire Services is implemented and enforced for catering for rapid growth in urban areas in Victoria. An independent panel can make decisions based on what is best for Victorian communities without the influence of any Union, Association or political party.
- The best Presumptive Legislation for all career staff and volunteers in the Country.
- Stop the ongoing, regular dirty industrial wars by reducing the influence of the United Fire Fighter's Union and the Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Association.
- Reinvigorate the Fire Services and allow greater autonomy as two separate entities but still provide for integration on the fire ground.

The introduction of Fire Rescue Victoria:

- Will not affect volunteer surge capacity. I literally have not met a single volunteer member who has said they will quit CFA if FRV is created. The scaremongering is just that.
- Will not change the way career staff interact and work with our volunteer colleagues. We will continue to train together, provide community education together, drink coffee together, eat meals together, and most importantly work in an integrated fashion together at emergencies.

I wish to urge the Select Committee to realise that you will be hit with many emotionally driven statements from many volunteer fire fighters claiming that this proposed Bill will tear apart the CFA. This distractive tactic should not overshadow the facts, and I urge all Committee members to simply deal with the facts rather than the emotion.


The CFA is a wonderful organisation that I have been very proud to be a part of for over 20 years now, but the CFA is broken, it is ailing, and it is failing. It is failing the community and it is failing its members. It is at war with itself. This has been the case for far too long now and it is now time for change. The leaders of Victoria, our politicians, have the opportunity to right the wrongs. Our leaders have the opportunity to instil a more practical, safer, better structured, and modernised Fire Services arrangement that protects Victorians in a way that they are entitled to be protected, and one that protects its volunteers and career staff by providing better systems and safety. Victoria is growing at a great rate of knots and our Fire Services need to catch up and then keep up. **We can** provide a safer fire ground for our people, and **we can** provide a much better and efficient fire

service to the community if we could only take the politics out of the fire services at all levels and start putting the community first. The Fire Fighter's Presumptive Rights Compensation and Fire Services Legislation Amendment (reform) Bill 2017 will do this. Please give strong consideration to this Bill as it will be a good thing for the communities within Victoria.

Yours sincerely

Senior Station Officer Brett Sleep - Dandenong Fire Station



<p>Our Ref: 230 Contact: Executive Officer Peter Davis 0407 334 685 Executive Officer Bob MacDonald 0413 22 690 Tel: 03 9556 1141 Fax: 03 9556 1615 Email: vfbv@vfbv.com.au Web Ref:</p>	 <p>Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Inc. A0043424H ABN: 110 530 50403 PO Box 453 Mt Waverley, Vic 3149 4 Lakeside Drive Burwood East, Vic 3151 Tel: 03 9556 1141 Fax: 03 9556 1615 Email: vfbv@vfbv.com P Davis: 0407 334 685 R MacDonald 0415 322 690 www.vfbv.com.au</p>
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20th July 2006

Dear Captain/Secretary/Group Officer/Group Secretary,

You will be aware that CFA has been negotiating an Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) with the UFU for over 12 months. This EBA contains clauses that seriously impact on the autonomy of CFA to make decisions, including some related to the relationship between CFA and its volunteers. On this basis, and because it undermines the statutory responsibilities of the CFA Board, Chief Executive Officer and Chief Officer, the CFA Board has refused to sign the agreement.

Volunteers in Victoria are very concerned with the implications of this EBA on CFA's ability to support them in providing the highest level of emergency services to Victorian communities. As such, we have unanimously supported the CFA Board's position in refusing to sign this agreement.

At a mass meeting held in Melbourne last week, volunteers agreed that action must be taken to increase public awareness of the threat to our capacity to do our job, and agreed to stage a public rally within the next few weeks; we have deferred this rally for the reasons mentioned below.

Since this meeting, VFBV has set up a Task Force with representatives of rural and urban volunteer associations to draw public attention to this issue. We believe that to be successful, a public campaign needs to be carefully developed and coordinated to ensure that the right messages are reaching the right people at the right time. Accordingly, we have developed a multi-pronged strategy which will be implemented over a sustained period and which will culminate in a major rally in Melbourne involving a greater number of our volunteers.

This strategy will have a local and regional focus, and will be expanded on a State-wide basis to highlight what VFBV sees as issues most affecting fire protection services to Victoria. Our campaign will include media, meetings with MPs, and mass public rallies. Within the next few days we will be appointing five volunteer coordinators at each Region. Their role will be to make sure all activities are coordinated and that we speak with one united voice. With 100 coordinators supported by 58,000 volunteers, we will send a strong message that this situation must never arise again.

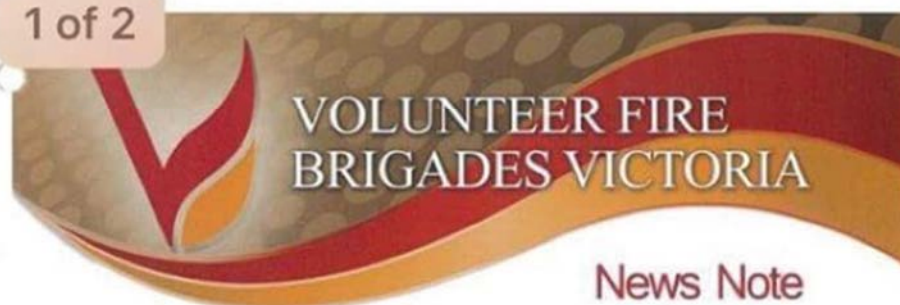
We will let you know details of this arrangement shortly, and details of how you can help.

In the meantime, it is important you understand that the issue we have with the EBA is not a campaign against our career firefighters. In fact, we strongly support their rights to negotiate pay and conditions of employment. We are all professionals, and we must continue to work as a team with our career firefighters to achieve the best outcomes for public safety. It is important that we maintain our professionalism and avoid being led into any reaction that may undermine the relationship with our career staff and CFA's overall operational effectiveness.

Could you please ensure that all members of your Brigade receive a copy of this letter or are fully briefed on what will be a major campaign in reinforcing the vital role of volunteers within CFA.

Gary Lyttle AFSM
Chairman

1 of 2



Attn: Victorian State MPs - Thursday, 9 September 2010

CFA union deal a setback for volunteering

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria (VFBV) representing Victoria's 60,000 CFA volunteers is concerned that the CFA's newly signed enterprise bargaining agreement with the firefighters' union is a major setback for Victoria's volunteer fire fighting resource.

This industrial deal significantly disadvantages volunteers and was concluded without reference to them, departing from the CFA's signed commitment to involving volunteers in decisions that affect them.

The industrial agreement goes beyond normal union matters such as pay and conditions, and seeks to regulate CFA operations and management of other staff and volunteers.

In making this deal, CFA has committed itself to processes and practices that should relate to the 1% of their workforce the agreement covers, yet inextricably impacts heavily on another 97% (the CFA volunteers) who have had no say and, it would seem, no rights.

The CFA's deal with the union puts restrictions on volunteers by;

- Controlling and restricting volunteer training arrangements
- Including a clause designed to prevent volunteers making submissions on issues involving them
- Preventing the use of paid firefighters on day shift allocation to support volunteer brigades, unless it is part of a progression to a 24 hour staffed fire station, whether the community needs it or not
- Blocking experienced volunteers and other suitable industry candidates from entering paid employment with CFA in jobs they are qualified and experienced to do.

The industrial agreement represents another hurdle in the path for access to and adequacy of training for volunteers, endorses a push towards more paid staff firefighters simply to

add to union membership and is a departure from the *Volunteer Charter*, in which Government and CFA agreed to involve volunteers in any decision which affects them.

The *Volunteer Charter* was signed the Premier, Police and Emergency Services Minister and CFA Chairman in October 2008 to much fanfare.

VFBV wrote to the CFA, Minister and Premier in February 2010, listing 12 points of concern with the enterprise bargaining negotiations that were then under way, but volunteers were still excluded from having their voice heard.

CFA's vast volunteer fire fighting resource has proven itself to be both professional and irreplaceable.

VFBV stresses that if the state is to retain that protection, there must be greater priority and investment given to maintaining and building CFA volunteer capacity, not just in numbers but in levels of training and equipment of brigades.

The CFA's newly signed enterprise bargaining agreement is a setback for that vital community resource.

VFBV contact: Peter Beaton pbeaton@vfbv.com.au

SKILLS PROFILES (Career Staff and Volunteers)

Volunteer Firefighter

Wildfire Firefighter Qualification (Q0002)

- **PUAFIR201A:** Prevent injuries
- **PUAHS002A:** Maintain safety at an incident scene
- **PUATEA001A:** Work in a team
- **PUAOPE002A:** Operate communication systems and equipment
- **PUAFIR204A:** Respond to wildfire
- **PUAFIR309A:** Operate pumps
- **END TANKER (G):** Operate pump on a tanker.

Minimum Skills Profile:

(The minimum skills and knowledge required by a CFA member to enter the fire/incident ground and operate safely, effectively and efficiently as a member of a team under supervision.)

Career Firefighter level 1

- 1.01 Health & Fitness
- 1.02 Preparation & Maintenance of Equipment, Appliances & Facilities
- 1.06 Occupational Hazards
- 1.07 Personal Protection 1
- 1.08 Occupational Stress
- 1.16 Casualty Assistance
- 1.22 Fire Agency Awareness 1
- 1.23 Work Team Communication
- 1.24 Writing Skills for Work
- 1.04 Driving Vehicles 1
- 1.05 Alarms & Sprinklers
- 1.09 Map Reading 1
- 1.10 Building Structures 1
- 1.11 Fire Suppression 1
- 1.12A Wildfire Behaviour 1
- 1.12B Wildfire Suppression 1
- 1.13 Vehicle Rescue
- 1.14 Search & Rescue
- 1.15 Breathing Apparatus (Open Circuit)
- 1.17 Emergency Care
- 1.19 Communication Systems
- 2.02 Inspect & Test Equipment
- 2.05A Emergency Life Support Techniques
- 2.07 Occupational Hygiene
- 2.24 Fire Agency Awareness 2
- 2.03A Drive Vehicles on Road (Legislation)
- 2.05B Operate Life Support Equipment
- 2.06 Personal Protection 2
- 2.15A Salvage & Overhaul
- 2.15B Ventilation
- 2.16 Dangerous Substances 1
- 2.32 Fire Science – Intro B

*CFA Operational Staff Skills Profile – by Rank

CFA Volunteer Captain

Knowledge, skills and experience (desirable unless otherwise stated):

- Demonstrated ability to lead and manage diverse groups in a changing environment.
- Demonstrated high level of interpersonal skills and effective presentation and oral communication skills.
- Demonstrated understanding and ability to implement management systems for business planning, finance, training and human resources.
- **Wildfire firefighter qualification (Q0002A) – Mandatory**
- **Wildfire Low-Structure firefighter (Q0003A) – Desirable**
- **Crew Leader qualification (CFA065) – Desirable**
- **Minimum of 2 years as a Lieutenant.**

* Brigade Membership Classification Role Description Captain.

CFA Career Station Officer.

All CFA Career Firefighter and Leading Firefighter Competencies plus,

3.10 Writing Workplace Documents

3.12 Dealing with Conflict

3.13 Negotiation Skills

3.07 Dangerous Substances 2

3.18 Wildfire Suppression 3

3.21 Introduction to Law

3.23 Wildfire Behaviour 3

3.24 Meetings

4.02 Pre-incident Planning 1

4.03 Operational Management

4.04 Incident Control System

4.07 Fire Prevention 2

4.11 Communication 1

4.16 Leadership & Team Management

4.10 Administration 2

4.15 Public Relations A

*CFA Operational Staff Skills Profile – by Rank

Minimum of 12 months full time employment as a Leading Firefighter plus,

-3 week full time development course

-2 months station development and personal study

-1 week of assessments including;

-4 Hours Operations legislation exams. (CFA act, Regs, EBA)

-1x 1.5 hour rural command and control TEWT (Tactical exercise without troops)

-1x 1.5 hour wildfire exam.

-1x 1 hour Inray exam.

-1x 20 minute short duration drill presentation.

-1x Human Relations role play exam.

-2x Command and Control Practical assessments.

All of the above Station officer assessments are pass or fail.

*Station officers Must be endorsed by the Chief Officer.

Volunteer Firefighter

Wildfire Firefighter Qualification (Q0002)

- **PUAFIR201A:** Prevent Injuries
- **PUAOHS002A:** Maintain safety at an incident scene
- **PUATEA001A:** Work in a team
- **PUAOPE002A:** Operate communication systems and equipment
- **PUAFIR204A:** Respond to wildfire
- **PUAFIR309A:** Operate pumps
- **END TANKER (G):** Operate pump on a tanker.

Minimum Skills Profile:

(The minimum skills and knowledge required by a CFA member to enter the fire/incident ground and operate safely, effectively and efficiently as a member of a team under supervision.)

Career Firefighter level 1

- 1.01 Health & Fitness
 - 1.02 Preparation & Maintenance of Equipment, Appliances & Facilities
 - 1.06 Occupational Hazards
 - 1.07 Personal Protection 1
 - 1.08 Occupational Stress
 - 1.16 Casualty Assistance
 - 1.22 Fire Agency Awareness 1
 - 1.23 Work Team Communication
 - 1.24 Writing Skills for Work
 - 1.04 Driving Vehicles 1
 - 1.05 Alarms & Sprinklers
 - 1.09 Map Reading 1
 - 1.10 Building Structures 1
 - 1.11 Fire Suppression 1
 - 1.12A Wildfire Behaviour 1
 - 1.12B Wildfire Suppression 1
 - 1.13 Vehicle Rescue
 - 1.14 Search & Rescue
 - 1.15 Breathing Apparatus (Open Circuit)
 - 1.17 Emergency Care
 - 1.19 Communication Systems
 - 2.02 Inspect & Test Equipment
 - 2.05A Emergency Life Support Techniques
 - 2.07 Occupational Hygiene
 - 2.24 Fire Agency Awareness 2
 - 2.03A Drive Vehicles on Road (Legislation)
 - 2.05B Operate Life Support Equipment
 - 2.06 Personal Protection 2
 - 2.15A Salvage & Overhaul
 - 2.15B Ventilation
 - 2.16 Dangerous Substances 1
 - 2.32 Fire Science – Intro B
- *CFA Operational Staff Skills Profile – by Rank

CFA Volunteer Lieutenant***Knowledge, skills and experience (desirable unless otherwise stated):**

- Demonstrated ability to lead and manage diverse groups in a changing environment.
- Demonstrated high level of interpersonal skills and effective presentation and oral communication skills.
- **Wildfire firefighter qualification (Q0002A) – Mandatory**
- **Wildfire Low-Structure firefighter (Q0003A) – Desirable**
- **Crew Leader qualification (CFA065) – Desirable**

* Brigade Membership Classification Role Description Lieutenant

CFA Leading Firefighter

All Career Firefighter level 1 competencies plus,

- 1.20 Computer Skills
- 1.21 Workplace Communication
- 2.04 Operate Pumps
- 2.25 Present Information (Public Education)
- 2.03 Operate Vehicles (A)
- 2.20 Specialist Appliances (I)
- 2.08 Detection & Suppression Systems
- 2.09 Building Evacuation Systems
- 2.12 Fire Behaviour (CFA)
- 2.21 Fire Prevention 1
- 2.28 Wildfire Behaviour 2
- 2.29 Wildfire Suppression 2
- 2.33 Map Reading 2 (CFA)
- 2.10 Mechanical Venting & Air Handling
- 2.11 Building Structures 2
- 2.13 Fire Suppression 2
- 2.22 Administration 1
- 2.30 Introductory Maths for the Fire Industry
- 3.01 Occupational Health & Safety
- 3.09 Workplace Trainer Category A
- 3.11 Public Speaking
- 3.15 Supervising Teams
- 3.04 Fireground Operations
- 3.05 Building Fire Safety 1
- 3.14 Leadership

*CFA Operational Staff Skills Profile – by Rank

Minimum of 48 months full time employment

-3 week full time development course

-2 months station development and personal study

-1 week of assessments including;

-4 Hours Operations legislation exams. (CFA act, Regs, EBA)

-1x 1.5 hour rural command and control TEWT (Tactical exercise without troops)

-1x 1.5 hour wildfire exam.

-1x 1 hour Inray exam.

-1x 20 minute short duration drill presentation.

-1x Human Relations role play exam.

-2x Command and Control Practical assessments.

All of the above leading Firefighter assessments are pass or fail.

*Leading Firefighter must be endorsed by the Chief Officer.