

Dear Committee Members

Thank you for giving me the chance to put my submission to the inquiry. A brief history of who I am; my family has been involved with the CFA for 3 generations and we have seen many changes and vast improvements to the C.F.A. over that time, but never has there been a time that major changes have occurred without everyone involved with the C. F.A. being given enough time and proper detail to enable them to respond.

This Fire Service Bill will change the way we operate which includes fighting fires, training and all the other activities that the C.F.A. does so well at present under the existing structure.

By allowing the Government to sign off on the E.B.A and thus giving the Union (U.F.U) the power to alter the way C.F.A operates today will not solve anything. Splitting the C.F.A into 2 organisations will only further complicate the way we operate and the approximately 50 clauses in the new E.B.A will effect volunteers in the way we operate, train, promote community fire safety and being able to influence and override the powers of our Chief Officer, are just some of the problems.

The 8 previous fire service reviews, quoted by Government, have never recommended that the C.F.A. be split into a fully staffed service and a fully volunteer service. To suggest or say otherwise is dishonest. The present Government's own review recently stated that the existing C.F.A's integrated model should be strengthened to preserve the vital surge capacity of volunteers.

The presumptive cancer legislation is also a disgrace to volunteer fire fighters as it is a different model to what paid fire fighters have been offered, it has more restrictions put on the volunteer model. The presumptive cancer legislation should never have been added to the Fire Services Bill as it is a different issue and the Andrew's Government had already said before the last election that they would bring presumptive legislation in.

So please leave the C.F.A as it is so that we can continue to do our job and not have this political interference which is very demoralising for volunteers.