

eSubmission – Select Committee

Firefighter Presumptive Rights Compensation and Fire Services Legislation Amendment (Reform Bill) 2017

Bogong Group CFA – Group Officer Ron Leary

Dear Sirs/ Madams

The following are relevant points to be considered concerning the above proposed legislation. As a Group Officer I am responsible for a number of Brigades within the Bogong area. I have spoken at length with the Captains that represent each of these brigades and I believe the following represents the greater opinions from these brigades.

1. To move forward we need to adopt change and move towards a new CFA. We see the term of 'getting on the bus' to include our Group. We are on the bus and we want to see change that is positive and progressive towards an efficient and successful inclusive CFA.
2. Respect between and for both Staff and Volunteers, paid and unpaid, needs to be maintained and honoured at all times by all involved with CFA or FRV.
3. CFA has been successful in the past due to it's implementation of 'Chain of Command'. Today, if a volunteer attends a Level 1 incident and assumes the role of 'Incident Controller' he remains the same, with a chain of command forming under him and to the side of him to assist him in dealing with the incident. Volunteers train and build their skills over many years to be able to deal with incidents. Many having formal qualifications to manage Level 2 Incidents and some even Level 3 Incidents such as we saw on Black Saturday and Ash Wednesday. We need to maintain this structure involving volunteers at high levels of the chain of command and aims structure, moving forward.
4. We are concerned that with the formation of FRV, the budgetary allowance for CFA plant and equipment will become reduced somewhat. Keeping Brigades equipment up to date is vital to providing quality delivery.
5. Training has been a subject of concern with our brigades for a number of years. Under the proposed legislation who will deliver the training that our members need to enable them to perform the duties required of a CFA member? If it legislated or via this legislation enforceable that only FRV personnel are allowed to deliver training requirements, it will be detrimental to our brigades. This is simply due to the logistics of being able to supply an FRV member when the training and how the training is required. CFA members require a great deal of flexibility within training delivery, due to all having other careers to have to maintain.
6. Mental Health of staff and volunteer needs to be a high priority. Respect and trust between staff and volunteer is vital to unity, working as a cohesive unit is vital to manage workload. All this contributes to mental health. FRV members seconded into CFA leaves the door open to a lack of unity as is being displayed in some areas today. We cannot afford this moving forward.
7. The disbursement and use of equipment between the proposed Fire Rescue Victoria and CFA is of some concern to us. How will this be addressed ? There seems to have been very little

thought gone into who will be able to utilise various equipment. Particularly during a campaign fire where necessity arises for all sorts of equipment to be utilised.

I trust that the Select Committee will consider these points as relevant and all within the terms of reference provided to us.

For any further information or clarification I can be contacted at any time on [REDACTED]

Kind Regards

Ron Leary

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