

Senate Committee Fire Services Legislation July 6th 2017

I would advise you all that in my early working life in the metal industry as a Toolmaker I was a member of the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union for quite some time and a labour party voter for the first 20 years of my working life but i have never been a member of any political party.

I am sending this submission to voice my disgust at the current path this present Labour Government is taking in regards to being controlled by the UFU in this very important community Fire Safety Legislation.

The present Union controlled Andrews Governments proposed to split up of the current CFA Fire Service is a deliberate attempt to promote the powers of the minority UFU members at the expense of the dedicated 60,000 Volunteer Fire Fighters and the rural communities across Victoria.

I find it had to believe that such a major legislation change has been proposed with very little consultation with the CFA volunteers; the haste in rushing this Legislation without any fact finding committees investigating both current and future costs to the Victorian taxpayers, and if there will be any great benefits to the community's fire safety. I doubt that there will be any long term community benefits.

My belief is the costs will be massive, putting pressure on Government to increase the Fire Services Levy in the very near future. It is without doubt the largest contributors of this levy are the rural properties across Victoria who are currently paying very large amounts on their assets with the vast majority being volunteer CFA members.

One of my very serious concerns, is if this proposed legislation is passed the proposed idea to transfer current UFU CFA Operational Staff to the FRV operational positions is absolutely absurd. This will not be workable with UFU members controlling volunteers. Presently there is so much unrepairable conflict between staff and volunteers all brought on by some but not all UFU Operational Staff Members - bullying volunteers. Please refer to my Senate Enquiry Submission which is also attached.

The only solution if the CFA is split into 2 groups would be for the Government to advertise across Australia for applicants for these Operational Positions. These positions need to non-union contracts; I know there are many highly skilled people within the CFA Volunteer Ranks other Emergency organizations, including professional business persons who would be capable of performing these roles to a very high standard. This structure would in my view be a very positive outcome for all CFA Volunteers across the state.

Finally as a veteran CFA Volunteer I can only hope your committee will not be influenced by an politically pressure to jeopardise the position of CFA Volunteers in our role of protecting Life and Property for all Victorians.

NOTE I offer myself available to speak to your committee if you so desire.

Yours Sincerely



Terry Hedt AFSM Anakie Group Officer / Little River Captain 