



PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

**2009-10 AND 2010-11 FINANCIAL AND PERFORMANCE
OUTCOMES QUESTIONNAIRE — PART TWO**

METROPOLITAN FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES BOARD

DUE: TUESDAY 13 DECEMBER 2011

Question 1

It is noted that the MFB has a Gender Inclusion Action Plan (GIAP) covering 2010-2013. In this document it is reported that *'in October 2009, women at the MFB constituted 8.5 % of the total number of employees and 3.2% of the operational workforce.'*¹ The GIAP established that the MFB *'Aim for a minimum of 20% female participants in MFB pre-employment training and mentoring programs.'*² It is further noted that, *'The progress we make in implementing the GIAP will be reported to State Government and published in our annual report.'*³ For 30 June 2009, 2010 and 2011, please supply the percentage of females:

- (a) in the total number of employees;
- (b) in the operational workforce; and
- (c) in MFB pre-employment training and mentoring programs.

Date	Percentage of females in the total number of employees	Percentage of females in the operational workforce	Percentage of females in MFB pre-employment training and mentoring programs
30 June 2009	8.74%	3.35%	-
30 June 2010	9.38%	3.36%	0.10%
30 June 2011	9.63%	3.57%	0.04%

Question 2

The *Reconciliation Action Plan 2008-2011* (p.8) states that the MFB will, *'Increase the number of Aboriginal trainees hired across the organisation.'*⁴ Can the Board provide information on how many Aboriginal trainees were hired across the organisation for each year from 2008?

Year	Number
2008-09	1
2009-10	-
2010-11	-

¹ Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Board, *Gender Inclusion Action Plan 2010-2013*, 2010, p.2

² *ibid.* p.8

³ *ibid.* p.3

⁴ Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Board, *Reconciliation Action Plan 2008-2011*, 2010, p.2

Question 3

It is noted that the performance measure 'Emergency Response Times Meeting Benchmarks' (*Annual Report 2010-11*, p.12) was not met for 2010-11 (87.3% against a target of 90%). This measure has been below its target for nine years.⁵ Reasons given for this were increasing travel times and new protective clothing.⁶ The Annual Report for 2009-10 gives the same reasons for below benchmark performance, stating that proactive programs were being developed to improve performance.⁷

- (d) Can the Board provide information on what measures are in place or planned to address timeliness?

The 2010-11 Annual Report details Emergency Response Times Meeting Benchmarks as 87.3%

Reasons provided for the "below 90%" benchmark performance were the additional time required to don the new Personal Protective Clothing (PPC) and increasing travel times due to traffic congestion. The report noted that proactive programs were being developed to improve performance. Those proactive programs are:

- On the 5 July 2010 the MFB implemented the "Ready to Go Strategy" for trial (Central District) and then progressively rolled out the strategy to all Districts. With real time indication of elapsed time, the strategy required the modification of the turnout announcement process via the addition of 70, 90 and 120 seconds awareness beep and voice announcement intended to provide responding crews with real time indication of elapsed time during turnouts.
- A PPC storage and donning DVD was produced and distributed to reduce time with a reduction in effort required to don new structural PPC
- A Fire Station modification program for the storage of PPC and assisting with the efficient donning of PPC is almost completed in existing fire stations. Storage and efficient donning facilities has been included in new Fire Station design criteria.
- The MFB continues to engage road traffic authorities, including VicRoads and local councils, regarding Fire Appliance egress from existing and proposed Fire Stations into traffic flows.

The 2010/11 Annual Report publishes 2011-2012 performance of 87.3%, an improvement of 3.2% from the previous year.

Other initiatives under longer term development include the introduction of mobile data terminals in fire appliances and continued ongoing improvement to fire station design.

Increasing traffic congestion will continue to challenge achieving the 90% Emergency Response Time Benchmark; however, the MFB continues to engage road traffic authorities to assist.

⁵ Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Board, *Annual Report 2010-2011*, September 2011, p.12

⁶ Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Board, *Annual Report 2010-2011*, September 2011, p.18

⁷ Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Board, *Annual Report 2009-2010*, September 2010, p.10

- (e) For how long is it estimated that the new protective clothing will affect the timeliness performance?

Heightened MFB emphasis on prevention of injuries in the wider MFB workplace will continue to impact the design of PPC and associated procedures. The MFB recognises that the introduction of the new PPC had a negative impact on turnout times and it is believed that extensive training and the installation of storage and donning facilities has assisted operational staff to gain efficiencies becoming more familiar and practised with donning procedures.

The new PPC is heavier and bulkier, and as a consequence more difficult to don. It meets Australian Standards and affords firefighters greater protection whilst fighting fires. It is now normal structural fire fighting attire and will remain as such for a number of years.

Although the PPC is now a normal work practice, it should be recognised that it has increased turnout times, although some efficiencies have been re-established, it needs to remain a consideration when comparing Emergency Response Times Benchmarks over a number of years.

Question 4

Can the Board provide information on how the Establishment of the Fire Services Commissioner has changed MFB's method of responding to emergencies?

The MFB responds to emergencies in predominantly the same way as it has done in the past. This may change in the future when work from the Fire Services Commissioner Reform Action Plan is implemented.

What has changed is that the FSC has ultimate control of Major Fire as the State Controller in Victoria. Normal business is undertaken under MFB procedures, however when an incident reaches 5th Alarm or higher, the MFB Chief Fire Officer must notify the FSC and discuss who has ultimate control.

MFB has greater involvement at a Regional (Metro) level and at a State level at the State Control Centre. This is articulated in the Victorian Command and Control Arrangements for Bushfire, which the three fire agencies endorsed. This has resulted in greater interagency cooperation at a regional and state level for the preparation for, and response to, bushfires both within and outside the Metropolitan Fire District.

Question 5

Can the Board provide information setting out whether the recommendations of the Bushfires Royal Commission has altered the organisational structure of the MFB?

Although the direct impact of the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission (VBRC) was more significant on CFA than MFB, it has contributed to several changes within MFB's structure. The changes include:

- Being a key driver for the creation of a new organisation structure. This included establishing an aligned classification structure to promote interoperability across the sector and alignment of the structure to the State Regional and Local Government boundaries. As part of this change, MFB has created and resourced two Regions with a core focus on service delivery.
- Change of titling and additional resources to focus on implementation of COAG's National Disaster Resilience Framework and Strategy. This focus is a key component of the Fire Services Commissioner's Reform Agenda and is reflected in the Government's Green Paper - *Towards a More Disaster Resilient and Safer Victoria*.
- An increased involvement and contribution in state emergency events and the State Control Centre. This includes the MFB Chief Fire Officer being a member of the State Fire Control Team with the Fire Services Commissioner and Chief Officers of CFA and DSE.
- Significant contribution to the Fire Services Commissioner's Reform Agenda. This includes providing three additional resources within the Chief Fire Officer's Office to support the development and implementation of the Reform Agenda.
- Across organisation contribution to the Fire Services Commissioner's Reform Action plan. This includes leading and contributing to agreed projects.
- An additional 100 firefighters to be deployed across the Metropolitan Fire District.

Question 6

The Department of Sustainability and Environment has instituted a Fire Learning Network, drawing on various different fire agencies.⁸ Can the Board set out MFB's contribution to this network?

The MFB doesn't participate. This Network is focussed on bushfire issues and the conversations with local communities are driven by those communities and generally relate to issues relating to bushfires.

⁸ Department of Sustainability and Environment, *Annual Report 2011*, September 2011, p.53

Question 7

Please outline any procedures the Board has to capture issues brought to light during operations that have the potential to improve service provision in future operations. How are standard operating procedures updated and improvements implemented once such issues are raised?

After significant incidents or incidents of interest, operational debriefs are held with crews and command staff that attended. These can also be run at an interagency level to capture lessons from a broader perspective. The debriefs capture the structures and processes that were put in place at the incident, along with things that went well and also Opportunities for Improvement (OI). A process is in place to monitor which incidents require a debrief to be undertaken. The procedure also documents the capture and recording of the debrief outcome including OI.

OI can arise from any incident, training exercise or initiative, eg. reading a journal article. These can be submitted via the Electronic Suggestion Box or directly to the Operations Improvement Department or other relevant department directly.

Opportunities for Improvement are dealt with by:

- actioning at a local level where the issue was identified,
- research into possible solutions or improvement, be they procedural or equipment,
- referring to relevant department for action, and/or
- issuing a Safety Alert or Advisory Notice

Progress is monitored and OI closed off once actioned.

Depending on the issue, changes to operational guidelines or procedures are included in the regular review process and issued when required. A critical issue may be dealt with by the development of a new procedure, investigating equipment or the like, or developing and implementing training.

Question 8

Please provide the following OH&S data for 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11:

- (f) the number of hazards/incidents reported for the year for the Board;
- (g) the number of 'lost time' standard claims for the year for the Board;
- (h) the average cost per claim for the year (including payments to date plus the estimate as at 30 June of the year of outstanding claims costs advised by WorkSafe); and
- (i) the full-time equivalent workforce included in OH&S statistics as at 30 June for 2009, 2010 and 2011

Year	Number of hazards/incidents	Number of 'lost time' standard claims	Average cost per claim	FTE workforce as at 30 June
2008-09	899	94	\$24,579	1994
2009-10	869	82	\$28,507	2014
2010-11	1,125	86	\$34,896	2033

Question 9

Please provide figures showing:

- (j) expenditure on training provided by external sources for operational staff for 2009-10 and 2010-11; and

2009-10	\$355K
2010-11	\$492K

- (k) an estimate of the cost of training provided by internal staff for operational staff for 2009-10 and 2010-11.

2009-10	\$3.810M
2010-11	\$5.215M

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The completed questionnaire must be returned by no later than COB, Tuesday, 13 December 2011.

Please return the response (including an electronic version) of the questionnaire to:

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