

District 17 VFBV submission to the Fire Services legislation

Lack of consultation.

One of the main concerns is that the majority of Volunteers are not fully aware of the impacts of the changes as the changes themselves within the legislation are too complicated or not clearly explained.

The restructure should be discussed “consultation” between CFA, MFB, VFBV only.

Concerns about budgeting issues and the long-term effects through the less funding to regional Victoria. In particular less capital for the building of new stations, building maintenance, truck, equipment and other infrastructure.

Operational

There is a growing feeling amongst Volunteers that the Chief Officer is towing the company line and not taking a stance in questioning the underlying concerns of the Volunteers.

Equipment - the replacement of equipment to service the needs of volunteers will become a major issue within the near future. We have already seen a cutback in funding for vehicles to the CFA. There is real concern that once the \$44 million for infrastructure is exhausted there will be reduced funding for volunteers.

Will there be any assurance that the \$44 will be spent Victoria wide or, will the lion share be spent on the co-location of the city based fire stations?

Serge capacity –It is foreseen that a lack of volunteers to assist others during large complex fires especially around metropolitan areas.

Strike teams will see a major reduction in volunteers willing to serve across Victoria. Feelings amongst members are they will most likely stay in their Districts or neighbouring districts.

There is a belief that Operational Officers and Operational Managers should be kept as CFA staff instead of not seconded to CFA from FRV.

Administration

FEM – there is an understanding that FEM could be transferred to FRV. Concerns have been raised about the future of the FEM and a loss of fund raising for CFA brigades.

Fire services levy – The levy and the way it is divided into the different emergency organisations needs to be fully costed and clearly explained where the funds are coming from and going.

We understand the BASO’s administration staff will stay at CFA but if they are transferred across to FRV the issues associated with FRV administration staff dealing with CFA correspondence and financial details raises concerns.

There needs to be a clear outline on who stays with CFA and who will be transferred.

Presumptive Cancer legislation

The legislation should never be bundled with the reform measures.

Training

Future CFA training needs be aligned with CFA volunteers meeting their needs, time constraints allowing for the differences in terrain and districts needs. Training needs to be more District specific having the ability to tailor and deliver when it's most needed.

Opportunities

Lateral entry to Volunteers to operation officers.

Allowing Districts to recruit and training Volunteer instructors to deliver qualified courses.