



Office of the CEO
Headquarters

17 October 2016

Mr Michael Baker
Secretary
Legislative Council Standing Committees
Parliament House, Spring Street
EAST MELBOURNE 3002

Dear Mr Baker

Standing Committee on the Environment and Planning Inquiry into Fire Season Preparedness (Committee)

We refer to your email of 14 October 2016 requesting that answers to questions on notice be given, effectively, by open of business 18 October 2016.

The questions on notice fall into the following categories:

1. the dates of the meetings Mr Greg Smith had with Ms Lucinda Nolan prior to him becoming Chairman of the CFA (transcript page 5);
2. all documents relating to the 10 June 2016 briefing, including emails and notes (transcript pages 9 and 29);
3. details on the progress and projection (time frames) of the facility in the Central Highlands (transcript page 22);
4. all estimates of the EBA's impact on response to fire (work preparation and assessments that have been done by the CFA, the staff and the Chief Fire Officer, current and former) (transcript page 29);
5. notes that are available on funding for courses and the number of training sessions, both paid and volunteer staff (transcript page 29);
6. copies of the board minutes and agendas for the CFA for the last 12 months (transcript page 29); and



7. the documentation that Mr Warrington referred to on page 20-21 of the transcript in relation to the CFA and the community preparing for the fire season.

We respond to these matters in turn below.

1. Dates of the meetings Mr Smith had with Ms Nolan prior to Mr Smith becoming Chairman of the CFA

Mr Smith has examined his diary and is unable to locate the dates that he met with Ms Nolan. Mr Smith recalls that he met with Ms Nolan on three occasions.

On review of the CFA records, Ms Nolan met with Mr Smith on 11 February and 18 May 2016.

2. Documents relating to the June 10 2016 briefing

Please find **enclosed** the following documents:

- a) email from Ms Nolan to the CFA Operational Leadership Team (OLT) dated 9 June 2016 at 2.53pm, "Urgent – approved version of letter for OLT", attaching 'OLT Final letter'. The OLT consists of the Chief Executive Officer, the Chief Officer, the Deputy Chief Officer, the Executive Directors and a representative from the Assistant Chief Officers;
- b) email from Mr Joe Buffone to Ms Nolan, copying in the OLT, dated 9 June 2016 at 3.17pm, "Urgent – approved version of letter for OLT";
- c) email from Ms Nolan to OLT, dated 10 June 2016, at 6.27pm, "Fwd: EB Update";
- d) email from Ms Emma Tyner to Mr Martin Anderson, copying in Ms Nolan and Mr Gerard Scholten, dated 10 June 2016 at 6.21pm, "EB Update";
- e) email from Mr Amber Brodecky to Ms Nolan and Ms Tyner, dated 10 June 2016, at 5.31pm, "Draft letter from OLT re: Board", attaching 'Draft letter from OLT re: Board';
- f) email from Ms Nolan to Ms Brodecky, dated 10 June 2016 at 5.37pm, "Re: "Draft letter from OLT re: Board"; and
- g) email from Ms Brodecky to Ms Tyner, dated 10 June 2016 at 5.41pm, Re: "Fwd: Draft letter from OLT re: Board".

3. Progress and projection (time frames) of the facility in the Central Highlands

A tentative site has been located for the new Central Highlands Campus and CFA is currently working through the suitability of the location with stakeholders including State and Local Government. Once a site has been secured, project implementation for the new facility will commence and the broad timeframes include:



- scoping and concept design completion to commence town planning approvals process by February 2017;
- construction commencement in July 2017;
- completion by May 2019; and
- operational by the end of June 2019.

4. Estimates of the EBA's impact on response to fire (work preparation and assessments that have been done by the CFA, the staff and the Chief Fire Officer, current and former)

On 12 August 2016, the CFA Board signed a resolution authorising the CEO to put the Country Fire Authority / United Firefighters Union of Australia Operational Staff Agreement 2016 (Proposed Agreement) to a vote of operational staff. In making their resolution, the Board considered, among other things:

- a) the statement of mutual intent (Joint Statement of Intent); and
- b) the report of the Chief Officer as to the operation of the Proposed Agreement; and his assurance that he has the requisite authority.

On 12 August 2016, the Chief Officer addressed the CFA Board on the impact of the Proposed Agreement on CFA operations and the powers of the Chief Officer. The Chief Officer stated that the Proposed Agreement was not expected to adversely impact on response times, and that this will be monitored closely by the CFA. The Chief Officer noted that he was assured, by a letter from the Chair of the Board, that the Proposed Agreement could not interfere with or detract from his powers under the *Country Fire Authority Act 1958*.

The Board Resolution of 12 August, Joint Statement of Intent and letter from the Chair of the Board to the Chief Officer are **enclosed** and also publicly available at: <http://news.cfa.vic.gov.au/news/statement-from-chair.html>.

5. Funding for courses and the number of training sessions, both paid and volunteer staff

CFA's mission to protect lives and property relies on a capable workforce who can confidently prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies. To enable this, significant focus is placed on investing in our people to ensure they have the necessary skills, competencies, experience and training to achieve our strategic objectives.

CFA is committed to ensuring training design, development and delivery addresses current and emerging risks and enables frontline service delivery, through equipping the integrated



staff and volunteer membership with quality training outcomes.

Since 2008, there have been thirteen independent reviews, strategies or plans related to CFA Training. The training function at CFA comprises of 175 full time employees, in support of all aspects of building core, specialist, career, incident management, leadership and management development. CFA currently conducts training through its network of 1219 volunteer brigades, at integrated stations, and onsite at each of the seven Victorian Emergency Management Training Campuses located throughout metropolitan and regional Victoria.

CFA has steadily increased investment in training. The financial figures will be provided by close of business Friday 21 October 2016.

Please see **enclosed** the following:

- a) Learning Totals for Financial Years from 2013-2016;
- b) Learning Data – Qualifications 2013 – 2016 Financial Years;
- c) Learning Data – Competencies 2013 – 2016 Financial Years; and
- d) Learning Data – Courses 2013 – 2016 Financial Years.

CFA has committed to improvements in training and to ensuring that frontline learning develops confident, safely trained CFA members ready to perform critical roles aligned to risk and the service delivery priorities of the Chief Officer. CFA is improving the provision of, and access to, training at times, formats and locations which are suitable for most CFA members. CFA is also focussed on ensuring members' skills and experience are recognised, respected and utilised to improve engagement and satisfaction. CFA is making improvements to CFA training facilities so that they remain fit for purpose.

The OLT have also endorsed a “CFA Learning Action Plan” in 2016 to deliver benefits to all members, **enclosed**.

6. Board minutes and agendas for the CFA for the last 12 months

a) Board Agendas

Please find enclosed the following agendas:

- 17 August 2015
- 21 September 2015
- 19 October 2015
- 16 November 2015
- 14 December 2015

- 20 January 2016
- 15 February 2016
- 21 March 2016
- 18 April 2016
- 29 April 2016
- 10 May 2016
- 16 May 2016
- 30 May 2016
- 2 June 2016
- 6 June 2016
- 10 June 2016
- 25 June 2016
- 11 July 2016
- 18 July 2016
- 8 August 2016

b) Board Minutes

Please find enclosed the following agendas:

- No. 1176 Board Minutes 17 August 2015
- No. 1177 Board Minutes 21 September 2015
- No. 1186 Board Special Minutes 10 May 2016
- No. 1189 Board Special Minutes 2 June 2016
- No. 1190 Board Special Minutes 6 June 2016
- No. 1193 Board Special Minutes 25 June 2016
- No. 1194 Board Special Minutes 11 July 2016
- No. 1195 Board Minutes 18 July 2016.

We have identified a number of CFA board minutes within the scope of the Committee's request which may be the subject of an executive privilege claim on the basis that their production would be prejudicial for the public interest. A number of the documents are currently the subject of discovery orders in the Supreme Court proceeding *Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria v Country Fire Authority* (SCI 2016 002269) and claims of legal professional privilege, without prejudice privilege and/or public interest immunity have been



made over them. Public release of the documents during the course of that proceeding, in particular, would have the potential to prejudice the conduct of that proceeding. The CFA is in the process of seeking the Minister's views on whether a claim of executive privilege should be made.

7. Documentation that Mr Warrington referred to on pages 20-21 of the transcript in relation to the CFA and the community preparing for the fire season.

Please find **enclosed** the following documents:

- a) Legislative Committee Environment & Planning Standing Committee, Inquiry into Fire Season Preparedness, CFA Chief Officer Steven Warrington;
- b) CFA Services Delivery Assurance Program – Preparedness Manual June 2015;
- c) CFA Services Delivery Assurance Program – Preparedness Manual July 2016, (version 1.1);
- d) Emergency Management Victoria, Pre-Season Update 2016-17 Summer Season Front Line Safety;
- e) Emergency Management Victoria 2016-17 Preseason Program Brief;
- f) 2016-17 Regional Pre-Summer Season Briefing Schedule;
- g) 2015/16 Regional Pre-Season Brief;
- h) 2016-17 Regional Pre-Summer Season Briefing Schedule at 11 August 2016;
- i) CFA Fire & Emergency Management Training Strategy Outcomes – Performance Dashboard for 2013-14 financial year; and
- j) CFA Fire & Emergency Management Training Strategy Outcomes – Performance Dashboard for 2014-15 financial year.

Yours sincerely

Frances Diver
Chief Executive Officer
Country Fire Authority