



Scott Fischer [REDACTED]
06/07/2017 09:00 PM

To Consultation/DTF@DTF
cc
bcc
Subject Submission For Fire Services Reform

For Attention,

Please see attached document as Submission for Fire Services reform .

Regards



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Dear Assistant Clerk Committees.docx

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INQUIRY INTO THE FIREFIGHTERS' PRESUMPTIVE RIGHTS COMPENSATION AND FIRE SERVICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (REFORM) BILL 2017

1. I am

- • Leading Firefighter Scott Colin Fischer B Shift Boronia Fire Station.
- • Employed by Country fire Authority.
- • Since August 2006
- • My Qualifications include;

COURSE IN AUSTRALASIAN INTER-SERVICE INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.

COURSE IN FIRE RESCUE EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONSE FIRST RESPONDER

CERTIFICATE III IN FIREFIGHTING (OPERATIONS)

ENDORSE DRIVE & OPERATE HEAVY SCANIA 2009

ENDORSE DRIVE & OPERATE TANKER 3.4D

ENDORSE MSA SIRIUS GAS DETECTOR

ENDORSE USAR CAT 2 OPERATOR

WILDFIRE FIREFIGHTER

WILDFIRE-LOW STRUCTURE FIREFIGHTER

WILDFIRE STRUCTURE FIREFIGHTER

STRUCTURE - WILDFIRE FIREFIGHTER

CREW LEADER - WILDFIRE

CREW LEADER - STRUCTURE OPERATIONS OFFICER A

GROUND OBSERVER

CERTIFICATE IV IN TRAINING & ASSESSMENT

73 CFA endorsed firefighting modules

I have been awarded the following awards;

- Australian Actice Service Medal (East Timor Clasp)

- Australian Service Medal (CT – SR Clasp)
- National Emergency Medal (Vicfires 2009 Clasp)
- Australian Defence Medal
- United Nations Transitional Administration In East Timor.

2. I live in Warranwood and work at Boronia Fire Station.

3. I am writing this submission in support of the proposed reform of the fire services for the following reasons:

As a Leading Firefighter at Boronia Fire Station my responsibilities include but not limited to;

Supervise and co-ordinate personnel to provide a high standard of emergency response within a professional integrated career/volunteer emergency service. This becomes very difficult to achieve at an emergency as on many occasions Boronia Fire Station is supported by a volunteer response (if a response at all), The volunteer Fire Stations that support Boronia Fire Station have 6 mins to get a truck out the fire station doors and on the road to support the Career Staff at Boronia (Crew of 4). Then upon arrival of that volunteer response the crew of that vehicle maybe inappropriately trained, equipped and without the capacity to perform all roles at that emergency call. These are all assessments that I must make with our volunteers (at that emergency call I might add) at every emergency call I attend with volunteers, over time I have formed working relationships with some key members of volunteer brigades and have an appreciation of the volunteers abilities but not all.

At an emergency call, the ability to perform a task or work safely, support and assist personnel already at the call should be something that is guaranteed, is it simply not good enough, that in this day, that this is a maybe.....

This maybe, significantly changes the way an emergency call is responded to once crews have arrived due to many factors not limited too; Fire attack (how aggressively fires are first attacked) Road accidents (4 Crew can only assist 4 people), most Road accidents have multiple casualties and when the Volunteer crew arrives they maybe or may not have the required skills to actually assist the crews on the ground. The level of supervision then that is required increases. The tasks (given to volunteers) and supervision that is required of me at an emergency call to volunteers sometimes compromise's my ability to suitably supervise the career firefighters below me, my only comfort is knowing the abilities of those career firefighters.

An example of this was a House fire in Ferntree Gully that I attended, the 2 career firefighters had made entry in through the garage of the property, my officer asked myself to supervise some volunteer crews and to make access through the roof of the tiled property, to halt the fire spread through the roof space, after searching the area for 4 suitably trained volunteer firefighters (4 breathing apparatus wearers who stated to me that they had previously worked on a fire affected roof), I then brief crews with exactly what I wanted them to do, I received acknowledgement from the crews and an understanding that they knew what was required of them on the roof. I then stated that I would supervise them heading up the ladder and onto the roof at which time once they were safely on the roof I would head around to the back of the property where I could supervise their tasks from the ground. Once at the rear of the property I found that the crews had disobeyed some critical elements in my brief, it was at this point a crew member then fell through the roof. The tasks given to me by my officer had now changed, and our priority was the rescue of this crew member, knowing full well the career firefighters inside were still under my supervision my attentions however focused on the rescue of the volunteer crews on the roof, once again we were spread thin on the ground, compromising safety. In reflection I became very disappointed within myself as I overestimated the skills and abilities of the volunteer crew that evening. I put 4 crews on the

roof that night, if they were career firefighters I would have only put 2 crews on the roof. The fact that crews directly disobeyed a direction given by myself at that particular call, risks the lives of themselves and fellow firefighters at that call.

This occurs on regular bases with supporting brigades for Boronia, on too many occasions at an emergency call Senior Station Officers and Leading Firefighters decisions are questioned and often disobeyed. Also at this particular call, inappropriate appliances were responded from volunteer stations (under the guise of crew transport & volunteers need the driving experience) further putting the community at risk driving under lights and sirens.

If however at this particular call, under FRV 7 Career firefighters were dispatched to this event the likelihood of the above occurring severely decreases due to the training (18 week recruit course) that a career firefighter receives. Also the on Station training conducted daily by the Senior Station officers, Station Officers and Leading Firefighters and Firefighters on station greatly enhances the abilities of the Career Firefighter crew, the studies and firefighting modules that have to be completed by career personnel all aid the career crews attending this call, volunteers are not required to complete any firefighting modules (attached are the career firefighting modules). The Damage to property at this call would have been significantly less also, due to knowledge around fire behaviour/spread and best methods of suppression.

This all adds up to a safer community, less fire trucks on the roads travelling to an emergency, less risks to the communities.

The areas where CFA has integrated Brigades 35 Stations need to be modernised as they are highly urbanised areas as part of the reform of the fire service. A rapid 8 minute response, with 7 professional career firefighters on two fire trucks is the minimum standard needed in highly urbanised areas. Far too often unfortunately 4 firefighters at Boronia have been left to fight fires by themselves waiting too long for support, resulting in further damage to community assets, property, infrastructure and or lives. On occasions when the next truck does finally arrive, the firefighters aren't qualified or suitably trained to perform all roles on the fire ground, this leaves those on the fire ground to carry a further burden of managing their safety as well. Enough on that.

The Reform to FRV will create for career firefighters in Victoria a single harmonious service without interference of a third party involving themselves in an Enterprise Bargaining agreement, essentially an agreement between Employer and Employee, no one else.

The CFA, which I have been a member of since August 2006, will remain the same minus career staff from 35 integrated stations, volunteers will continue to be able to do what they have done for years without the impost of staff.

I have tried to keep this rather short as I have hundreds of examples of a system that good luck, or good timing or 'lucky that didn't happen' has occurred and by pure chance rather than sound management or appropriate response to an emergency situation has occurred, more firefighters, lives or property haven't been lost or severely injured.

4. I attached 2 documents:

The first document is all the study modules asked of career firefighters to complete and the 2nd document is an extract from the Knox News Dated 27th April 1976, calling for reform some 41 years ago.

AFAC module	
Firefighter 1	
1.01 Health & fitness	Recruit course
1.02 Preparation & Maintenance Of Equipment, Appliances & Facilities	Recruit course
1.04 Driving Vehicles 1	Recruit course
1.05 Alarms & Sprinklers	Recruit course
1.06 Occupational Hazards	Recruit course
1.07 Personal protection 1	Recruit course
1.08 Occupational Stress	Recruit course
1.09 Map Reading 1	Recruit course
1.10 Building Structures1	Recruit course
1.11 Fire Suppression 1	Recruit course
1.12A Wildfire Behaviour 1	Recruit course
1.12B Wildfire Suppression 1	Recruit course
1.13 Vehicle Rescue	Recruit course
1.14 Search & Rescue	Recruit course
1.15 Breathing Apparatus (Open Circuit)	Recruit course
1.16 Casualty Assistance	Recruit course
1.17 Emergency Care	Recruit course
1.19 Communication Systems	Recruit course
1.22 Fire Agency Awareness 1	Recruit course
1.23 Work Team Communication	Recruit course
1.24 Writing Skills For Work	Recruit course
2.02 Inspect & Test Equipment	Recruit course
2.03A Drive Vehicles on Road (Legislation)	Recruit course
2.05A Emergency Life Support Techniques	Recruit course
2.05B Operate Life Support Equipment	Recruit course
2.06 Personal Protection 2	Recruit course
2.07 Occupational Hygiene	Recruit course
2.15A Salvage & Overhaul	Recruit course

September 2014

AFAC module	
2.15B Ventilation	Recruit course
2.16 Hazardous Materials 1	Recruit course
2.24 Fire Agency Awareness 2	Recruit course
2.32 Fire Science – Intro B	Recruit course
Firefighter 2	
1.20 Computer Skills	Recruit course
1.21 Workplace Communication	Recruit course
2.03 Operate Vehicles A	Recruit course plus endorsement on station
2.04 Operate Pumps	Recruit course plus endorsement on station
2.20I Specialist appliances	Recruit course
2.25 Present Information	Recruit course and on station
Firefighter 3	
2.08 Detection & Suppression Systems	CFA online
2.09 Building Evacuation Systems	CFA online
2.12 Fire Behaviour	CFA online
2.21 Fire Prevention 1	CFA online
2.28 Wildfire Behaviour 2	CFA course
2.29 Wildfire Suppression 2	CFA course
2.33 Map Reading 2	CFA online
Qualified Firefighter	
2.10 Mechanical Venting & Air Handling	CFA online
2.11 Building Structures 2	Recruit Course
2.13 Fire Suppression 2	Recruit Course
2.22 Administration 1	CFA online
2.30 Introductory Maths For The Fire Industry	CFA online
Leading Firefighter	
3.01 Occupational Health & Safety	CFA course – Follow and Define OH&S procedures
3.04 Fireground Operations	LFF Candidates course
3.05 Building Fire Safety 1	CFA online

AFAC module	
3.09 Workplace Trainer Category 1	CFA course - Plan, organise and deliver learning
3.11 Public Speaking	CFA course - Effective Presentation Skills
3.14 Leadership	CFA online
3.15 Supervising Teams	CFA online
Station Officer	
3.07 Hazardous Materials 2	CFA course - Hazardous Materials 2
3.10 Writing Workplace Documents	CFA course - Workplace communications
4.11 Communication 1	
4.15 Public Relations A	
3.12 Dealing with Conflict	CFA course - Conflict Management & Negotiation Skills
3.13 Negotiation Skills	
3.18 Wildfire Suppression 3	CFA course - Wildfire 3
3.23 Wildfire Behaviour 3	
3.21 Introduction To Law	CFA online
3.24 Meetings	CFA online
4.02 Pre-Incident Planning 1	CFA course - Emergency Planning
4.07 Fire Prevention 2	
4.03 Operational Management	CFA course - Operational Management
4.04 Incident Control System – AIIMS	CFA course - Introduction to AIIMS
4.10 Administration 2	CFA online
4.16 Leadership & Team Management	CFA course - Lead Manage & Develop Teams
Senior Station Officer	
4.08 Building fire safety 2	CFA course - Building Fire Safety 2
4.12 Interviews	CFA course - Recruitment & Selection
4.17 Introduction to Budgeting	CFA online
4.18 Human Resources Management 1	CFA online
4.20 Fire Law	CFA online
5.04 Incident Management Skills	CFA course - Incident Management Skills
5.07 Communication 2	CFA online
5.09 Team Performance	
AFAC module	
Operations Officer 1	
4.02 Pre-Incident Planning 1	CFA course - Emergency Planning
4.03 Operational Management	CFA course - Operational Management
4.04 Introduction to AIIMS	CFA course - Introduction to AIIMS
4.16 Leadership & Team Management	CFA course - Lead Manage & Develop Teams
5.04 Incident Management Skills	CFA course - Incident Management Skills
4.20 Fire Law	CFA Assignment and Learning Materials
Operations Officer 2	
4.25 Prescribed Burning 2	CFA course - Plan a Prescribe Burn
5.02 Incident Planning	CFA course - Incident Planning
5.05 Operational Analysis	CFA online
5.11 Human Resource Management 2	CFA online
Operations Officer 3	
5.03 Logistics Management	CFA course - Logistics Management
5.06 Project Management	CFA course - Project Management
5.10 Managing Finance - Budgets	CFA course - Manage Budgets
5.12 Planning and Managing Change	CFA course - Facilitate and Managing Change
Operations Officer 4 / Operations Manager 1	
5.13 Occupational Health and Safety Management	CFA course - OHS Safety Management
6.02 Major Operations Management	CFA online / RPL Portfolio
6.03 Policy and Legislation	CFA online

TAKEN FROM KNOX NEWS.
APRIL 21st 1976.

CITY BRIGADE, CFA 'MUST COMBINE'

The State and Federal secretary of the Fire Fighters' Union, Mr John Cameron, has called for the combining of the Country Fire Authority and the Melbourne and Metropolitan Fire Brigade.

Mr Cameron said this after last week's Knox-Sherbrooke News report in which brigade chiefs criticised fire-fighting facilities in the Dandenongs.

Mr Cameron said the duplication of costs between the two services was astronomical.

"It is ridiculous having two fire brigades paying money for the same services," he said.

"Both services have separate training schools.

"Why can't they combine together and train recruits from the one school?"

"I believe the present situation is a scandalous waste of taxpayers' money.

'NO REALITY'

"There seems to be no reality in the administration of both services.

"It is about time the powers-that-be realised that they are working with an archaic administration setup.

"There must be a combination of the two services for the safety of all residents of Victoria."

Mr Cameron said he believed it was ridiculous that fire stations such as Boronia and Ferntree Gully were under the control of the CFA.

He said areas such as these were no longer country centres.

"CFA brigades rely heavily on volunteers, and in these new outer-eastern suburban areas, people are not so community-minded as they are in the country.

BURDEN

"This has placed a heavy burden on the resources of all stations throughout the Dandenongs."

According to Mr Cameron the "critical" situation of CFA brigades in the Dandenongs has been coming for a long time.

He said the CFA was too top heavy.

"This is using money that could be better used improving stations around the state," he said.

Mr Cameron has written to the Premier, Mr Harmer, asking for a public inquiry into the state of Victoria's fire fighting services.

"While the State Government can impose on the generosity of volunteers to do the bulk of their work for nothing, they will continue to do so," he said.

"Fire protection is a job that has to be done.

"For the protection of everyone concerned, it should be done properly."

Union
chief
slams
'waste
of
cash
scandal'



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