

R T Hooper



1st July 2017

Assistant Clerk Committees
Department of the Legislative Council
Fire Services Bill Select Committee
Parliament House, Spring Street
EAST MELB OURNE 3002
E Mail LCSC@parliament.vic.gov.au

Dear Committee,

Re Fire Services and Presumptive Legislation Bill

I write to you as a concerned CFA Member with 60 years of service to express my utmost concern at the proposal for the Presumptive Legislation and any restructure of the Fire Services being linked together in one bill.

The push for Presumptive Legislation has been around for many years, and it seems that the desperation of the Premier to meet his commitments to Peter Marshall of the UFU, to get the CFA EBA through, that he has used the Presumptive Legislation Bill as a carrot to gain support.

The Presumptive Legislation should be separated from any move to restructure the Fire Services and ensure that both Career & Volunteer personnel are awarded the same cover and conditions as in the Queensland legislation, and not create a “them and us” type of approach as indicated in the proposal, which is obviously aimed at driving a wedge between the Career and Volunteer members.

Whilst there have been several reviews of the Fire Services over the years, none have recommended splitting the CFA up as now proposed. The common theme coming out of the reviews being the Veto powers of the UFU in various EBA’s and the effect on CFA ability to manage because of the restrictions placed through the veto.

It is interesting to note, that throughout the various media reports both TV and printed, no one has yet answered the question of what Peter Marshall has over Daniel Andrews that he would go to these extremes to vandalise the CFA, to meet what appears to be “payback”

There has been total disregard for the requirements of the CFA Act and Volunteer Charter to involve Volunteers in meaningful consultation on issues likely to impact on Volunteers.

The changes proposed appear to have been put together with little thought as to how they would work, no costings provided and lack of consultation.

There seems to be no end to the potential cost to the community or what the benefits would be.

It is quite obvious that this total package has been derived as a mechanism to get the ill fated CFA EBA passed and the Presumptive Legislation joined with it as a sweetener to get around the Fair Work Act.

As late as this week, our district has had a severe cut in its budget, yet dollars don't raise a mention in the proposal, which appears to have a bottomless pit.

We fear that the Fire Services Levy will be the milking cow to be used to manipulate future direction and meet the requirements of the UFU.

From media reports, both TV and newspapers there is a distinct indication by the body language of those interviewed, both Government and CFA Management that they know very little about the proposal and how it will work. Just thrust upon them to implement.

I could go on for ages, but am sure that other concerned members of CFA and the community at large will be making submissions for you to consider.

- I urge you to (a) separate the bills, and amend the Presumptive legislation to mirror the Queensland legislation**
- (b) Strongly reject any changes to the operation of CFA, and preserve a Proven, effective model**

Yours faithfully

R T Hooper AFSM