

## PROPOSAL TO RESTRUCTURE THE CFA & MFB

19/5/2017

Comment by CFA Volunteer Garry Luxford

To the honourable Select Committee I offer my comment for your consideration and input in making a fair and reasonable report to Parliament.

To support my comment I am a 50 serving volunteer still active and behind me a history of community service . Firefighter, Lieutenant, Captain, Deputy Group Officer, Group Officer 13 Years .Base radio operator 25 years. Major Fires , Many Structure with MFB and CFA, The Dandenongs, Pylong, Ash Wednesday ,Dargo ,Ash Wednesday, Black Saturday, Omeo and enough large fires and incidences in this state to appreciate true integration.

REGIONAL:- Operational, Training, Fireprevention, committees, and following major fires Review Committees etc.etc.

Helped Found a new Fire-Brigade and even built a fire truck.

At the highest level working side by side with CFA Staff and Volunteers ..

Been Contracted by the CFA to report on Fire fighting equipment and prepare specifications for tender . For the last 35 years carried out repair to standpipes , branches, adaptors and other Equipment..From all over the state..

I am a Justice of the peace and have served on many community committees and am a Rotarian helping locally and overseas projects.

## My Comment..

OVER VIEW :- At the highest level ;The Last 5 years has seen absolute turmoil in the two services with changes in the Boards,Chiefs,Chairpersons and Senior personal leaving for a variety of reasons. We have seen the current Government responsible for rail roading change and ambushing stakeholders both CFA and MFB.

We have seen what appears to be cohusion with the United Fighters Union.

Fundamentally this is absolutely wrong . You cannot get support from your stakeholders if you do not include them.

The mental health of members both Volunteer and Paid staff is affected and most are sick of it ..

I congratulate all coal face members for the job of protecting the community with all this turmoil going on ..

This current government should be ashamed of all the wasted dollars of paid staff and volunteers talking about the current issues when they should be contributing to protecting our community.

I plead with the select committee to throw out the proposed restructure and request a real committee be engaged with representatives from the CFA,MFB,UFU,VFBV, Govt, Municipal organisations ,Emergency management and other to review and formulate a Fire Service that truly protects the State of Victoria ..

That Volunteers are truly integrated in a Fire Fighting service that befits the risk and Volunteer Brigades are supported by a step by step inclusion of Staff as the Risk increases.

If You want proper cohesion involve the stakeholders.

That the full complement of shift fire fighters be reviewed and reduced/removed where it is established that during the evening that the Volunteer strength is capable to handle an emergency.

That the United Fire-Fighters Union represent their members and not drive fire-fighting operations . They must step back.. This and any government must distance its self from this militant body.NOW.

a, impact on fire service delivery across Victoria. b,effect on volunteer engagement and participation in fire service delivery.

This current proposal will affect volunteers in integrated stations as it will restrict their involvement in operations. They will be classed as a stand alone brigade under the same roof as the new proposed FRV managed by a co-opted FRV officer . This is stupid and immediately creates division.

The recruitment of 400 new fire-fighters is flooding and overwhelming Integrated stations while alienating volunteers in the ability to serve. Do we really need them.???

If the FRV model is adopted with a so called independent committee to determine brigade boundaries and the inclusion of more staff stations. This will be the spring board for the UFU to push for more Staff stations , more Paid members ,removing any incentive for CFA Volunteers to stay ..

The Writing is on the wall for CFA Volunteer Brigades to stay at full strength that are placed in the middle or near integrated stations .This is the greatest threat to outer Metropolitan Melbourne's CFA brigades. Mark my word .

In our area we have many.

If the FRV model is given the go ahead all volunteer Road Rescue Brigades would lose their rescue ability of which would go to the integrated station thus putting more pressure on volunteers not to stay.

This inturn would put more pressure on the Government to increase the size of the fire stations; add extra staff to man the rescue .. More money and wasted resources.

The proposal is so flawed and your committee has to hover like an eagle and look at the big picture to the true intent of this proposal. Government and Union

The Fact that this government has ambushed the fire services with this model has got members thinking negatively So how is it really going to work. Enough said.

c. Short term and long term cost impact on fire service provision.

With a reduced number of volunteers the pressure is on for more paid fire-fighters. Short term no real cost change, long term ;the pressure will come to employ more firefighters and with the current manning levels the most expensive fire service in the world.

d,Underlying policy Rational.

This government bowing to the union,with our most senior staff ; with their own agenda.

This current situation and proposal is flawed ill thought out and doomed to fail. Until all stake holders are given the chance to participate and develop an emergency plan; will it succeed.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute and I wish you well .

Garry luxford. 4/7/2017

