

Goomalibee Volunteer Fire Brigade
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JULY 6, 2017

The Honourable James Merlino MP
Minister for Emergency Services

1 Treasury Place
Melbourne Vic 3002

Dear Minister,

I speak on behalf of the members from Goomalibee fire brigade in District 23. We are a small volunteer fire brigade who strive to serve and support our community in times of need. While our small brigade is well seasoned (some members with 60+ years of service) we are willing to adapt to change within the emergency services, however, we wish to raise some concerns with how this has been undertaken and how that will affect us as volunteers. These have been raised by our brigade and are as follows.

- A concern with a lack of in depth consultation with all levels of the emergency services, particularly within the CFA. It is difficult to believe that the CFA will function efficiently and effectively without consulting the volunteers at the forefront of firefighting. This lack of consultation leave's the volunteers "wondering" where their future as a volunteer is heading, resulting in doubt and poor moral.
- The positive and negative effects of FRV stations implemented within mostly volunteer communities. This again will effect moral within the firefighting community with regard to how well the emergency services are able to work together, training and control over resources.
- The effect the restructure has on attracting new volunteers, and keeping current ones. Volunteer firefighters are vital to our community and as a small brigade it is already difficult to get a crew for turnouts.
- Training of CFA volunteers. Will training be performed by paid personal from outside the local region with limited knowledge of the local area and retrospective firefighting techniques?

These are some of the questions and concerns raised that need some clarity, and we hope a resolution is reached that will allow the emergency services, particularly those of the volunteer firefighting community to thrive. However, we firmly believe this cannot be achieved without extensive consultation to all levels of the CFA.

Warm regards,

Peter Bailey

CAPTAIN GOOMALIBEE FIRE BRIGADE