

From: mattgeorgia
To: [LCSC](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: CFA Volunteer BA Status and Capability
Date: Tuesday, 4 July 2017 2:03:25 PM

As the crux of my Submission to the select committee I present an Email (attached below) I created one year ago concerning the confusion of assumed capabilities between Volunteer Brigades and Professional fire-fighters. I am more than willing to answer any further queries the Email may raise.

I fully support the Fire Services Reform as a way of ensuring uniformity of terms, abilities, capabilities and Occupational Health and Safety. I have been a Workplace Health and Safety Representative and have the qualifications to do so. I also have specialist qualifications in HAZMAT, Long-Duration Breathing Apparatus, Breathing Apparatus Servicing and fire-ground accountability, Urban Search and Rescue and have particular involvement in training of Trench Rescue.

I have found myself personally accountable for the safety of CFA Volunteers on the Fire-ground several times and have found those situations too hit and miss to say that the current work systems are robust and work the way they are. Something needs to be done so we as community emergency service workers can work together safely. Volunteers are performing dangerous tasks for which they have had NO proper training.

I live in a CFA area on the boarder of the Metropolitan Fire District and have witnessed as a resident 4 fire directly across from my residence. Professional Fire-fighters from MFB and CFA attended each time along with CFA Volunteers.

The sad truth of the matter is, in my area, there is no real need for volunteers. I understand and commend the spirit and intent of the volunteers in my area but with professional fire-fighters from both Brigades already attending it makes no sense to subject volunteers and the public to the unnecessary risks associated with getting to the incident. Then, when at the incident, running the risk of volunteers performing duties like internal structural fire attacks for which they are , for the vast majority, not trained in.

Having stated that, let me also state that out in actual country areas, CFA Volunteers are the backbone of the organisation and could well be protecting their own properties or those of their friends and fellow community members. If I lived in an actual country area, I would also volunteer. I do not live in a country area. I live in metropolitan suburbia though it is deemed Country Fire Authority area. It was once the country a long time ago, but it is not now. The boundaries of MFB and CFA have not made sense for decades and as many, many new estates are built, the boundaries make less and less sense. The general public is not aware of this; that is very clear to me. The general public has no real idea about what the MFB and CFA is and does, let alone who are and are not volunteers.

Please receive this submission with the good intent it was created in. Please help end the

current stale-mate in the Fire Services. I am very disappointed to be serving the community as a dependable and professional Fire-fighter and yet despised by part of the community I serve because of misinformation. It has affected me deeply.

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] | [REDACTED]

From: CHARLWOOD, Matthew [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 4 July 2017 11:04 AM
To: Georgia&Freya [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: CFA Volunteer BA Status and Capability

From: CHARLWOOD, Matthew
Sent: Sunday, 24 July 2016 10:17 AM
To: BA Unit and Service Pod Operato; ERIKSON, Tim; Operations Improvement Department
Cc: UFU OFFICE; REUTER, Michael; LANIGAN, Robert; ARNOLD, George; FOSTER, Paul
Subject: CFA Volunteer BA Status and Capability

Hi to All,

Recently, The Evacuation Signal was sounded at a 3rd SF in 22's area. This was the Dakota Nightclub fire (23/5/16, C Platoon) with CFA Career FF and Volunteers in attendance.

After some experience working with Volunteers as BA Officer and again after the above call occurred (which I did not attend), I realised I do not know CFA BA Procedures. How can I be accountable for them as a BA Officer? Do they know what the Evacuation Signal is? Is that sound a car alarm caused by the fire and there is no need to worry about it?

Following up with my local CFA Brigade, an issue has come to light that anyone senior-manning the bus needs to know.

The Volunteers have 2 distinct levels of BA Competency:

- The first is the ability to wear BA. This is purely for a hazardous atmosphere. *It is an equipment based competency only.*

- The second level involves the further training in Search and Rescue with BA. This is more in line with what we assume is a BA Competency.

Both competencies allow the Volunteer to wear a BA decal on their helmet. ***It is up to the individual to volunteer the information that they are or are not able to assist with structural Fire-fighting.***

Further to this-

The current BA Search and Rescue course is only about conducting search and rescue in a smoke filled environment (not requiring the use or protection of a charged hose-line).

There is no door entry procedures, no internal fire behaviour component, no internal structure collapse training, no internal fire attack training etc.

There are Volunteers who do have the level of structural training required but these are in the minority.

This information is primarily targeted at BA Bus Operators, however, I firmly believe that anyone who could potentially turn-out with Volunteer FFs should be made aware of this (especially ICs). It seems like we are encountering Volunteer FFs in the MFD more and more.

To be truly 'Interoperable' we need to be made aware of these kind of issues.

No doubt, the BA Project will address some or all of these things however, we are quite some time away from its finalisation and implementation.

The intention of this Email is not to build walls. I am not anti-CFA, quite the reverse.

The intention is to raise awareness.

Please take this information in the spirit it is intended – Fireground Safety.

Matt Charlwood

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Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail.*

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