Submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry.

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Hon Ms Bronwyn Halfpenny MLC
Chair Inquiry into CFA Training College at Fiskville
Parliament of Victoria,
Environment and Natural Resources Committee,
Parliament House,
Spring Street,
Melbourne, VIC 3000

Thursday 26th March 2015

Dear Ms Halfpenny,

Re: Inquiry into the CFA Training College at Fiskville

As staff members of the Victorian Emergency Management Training Centre at Fiskville we welcome the opportunity to make a submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Fiskville.

Staff numbers at Fiskville vary, but we generally number between 70 and 80 people working in full time, part time, and casual positions. Our roles also vary. Some of us work in administrative roles supporting all other functional areas at Fiskville. We also work in catering and cleaning roles in the hospitality services area; in roles responsible for maintaining the grounds, buildings, and services on site; in roles maintaining information technology and communications systems and computer simulation training; in instructional roles delivering training in classrooms and on the PAD (Practical Area for Drills); in roles setting scenarios and operating props on the PAD; and in roles managing and co-ordinating the delivery of training and the activities which support training at a large and complex residential training centre.

Our roles at Fiskville enable us to interact with all clients and visitors to Fiskville and observe the activities undertaken here on a daily basis. We are in regular contact with these people before, during, and following their visits to Fiskville and as a result we are uniquely placed to provide an insight into Fiskville and its operations, its impacts on ourselves and others, and in helping to make recommendations for moving on.

And move on we must.

It is appropriate that the Inquiry look into past and present practices and their impact on people who have visited Fiskville over the years. However it is also important that the Inquiry look forward and identify opportunities to build on the advantages that Fiskville offers as a training centre now and can continue to offer and even build on into the future.

Fiskville fills an invaluable role in both the local community and emergency management sectors and it provides unique opportunities that no other fire and emergency training centre offers. Successive CFA Boards and senior managers, and successive Governments have let Fiskville down by failing to see these opportunities and take advantage of them. This Inquiry has an opportunity - indeed a responsibility, to rectify this.

Our vision is to see Fiskville operating as an all agencies-all hazards state of the art practical and hot fire training and research centre, operating under the highest occupational health, safety and environmental standards, with a managed and minimal carbon emission footprint.

We believe this vision is achievable.

In making this submission we trust that the members of the Inquiry can share this vision and help gain a commitment from all stakeholders to achieve it. In doing so the Inquiry will help ensure our state and our country are better prepared to face emergency situations.

To this end we submit the following, which is based on our individual and collective experiences and observations and with the knowledge available to us at the time of this submission:
Terms of Reference:

1. A comprehensive historical study of pollution, contamination and unsafe activities at Fiskville between 1970 and the present day.

In relation to pollution and contamination, the report *Understanding the Past to Inform the Future* prepared by Professor Joy in June 2012, and various other reports following investigations at Fiskville, indicate that pollution and contamination has occurred at Fiskville.

These reports could also be used to identify that unsafe activities have been conducted at Fiskville; however, we believe that this needs to be contextualised as the activities in question relate to historical practices also practiced by other agencies involved in hot fire training at the time they were practiced here.

The attitude of personnel who delivered or attended training at Fiskville at this time was also different to present day attitudes. It is fair to say that training during Fiskville’s early years was conducted in a gung-ho manner at times, and that bigger and hotter and blacker was better.

This is no longer the case and members of CFA and other agencies have returned to Fiskville for training again and again, always extolling its virtues. This surely would not be the case if there was any belief that practices were unsafe.

While practices and attitudes have changed, the feedback from instructors and trainees working at Fiskville throughout its history has been consistent and to the best of our knowledge unanimous – even from those who are now critical of Fiskville and its operations. We have regularly heard people reflect on their training at Fiskville, describing it as the best and most realistic training they have received anywhere.

While we recognise that many of Fiskville’s older practices do not comply with requirements for managing impacts on occupational health and safety and the environment (HSE) today, they should be viewed in accordance with the requirements that were relevant at the time, and with the knowledge of their impacts that was available then, rather than viewed solely with the benefit of hindsight.

They should also be viewed with the knowledge that safety briefings were provided prior to training. These briefings were of varying quality and detail in the early years of Fiskville’s operation, however they generally advised people to consider their safety and not engage in anything that they felt was unsafe or that they were not comfortable with. Briefings have continually evolved over time and today they are very comprehensive and tailored to meet the requirements of specific training activities.

Importantly and to the best of our knowledge, none of the practices now seen as unsafe were conducted with anything but good intent, that being to provide the best possible training experience for those involved.

As knowledge of the impacts of contamination and pollution has increased, legislation and workplace practices relating to HSE have changed and we believe that Fiskville has always accepted this and done its best to operate in accordance with these changes.

To help manage environmental and pollution issues only diesel fuel, unleaded petrol, and liquefied petroleum gas is used on the flammable liquids and gas PADs; the type and quantity of fuels used in other training areas has changed; the size and burn time of fires in all training areas is managed; and training drills are regularly adjusted when it is evident there may be an impact on others from smoke and emissions.

Every effort has been made to eliminate unsafe activities and improve workplace safety, and everyone who works in the training environment is required to prioritise their safety and the safety of others.

Work practices at Fiskville have changed significantly over the years relevant to this Inquiry, and while some changes have been mandated, others have been led by Fiskville without any formal requirement. Examples of this include the use of a permit system to manage fires during the fire danger period; the introduction of an emission control procedure and the provision of advice to relevant stakeholders when hot fire training is planned; the use of air monitoring equipment to prevent exposure to hazardous environments; and restrictions on personnel operating in synthetic smoke without respiratory protection just to name a few.
In addition, various local government and regulatory authorities have had occasion to examine aspects of Fiskville’s operations over the years. These include the Shire of Moorabool, the Department of Health, Central Highlands Water, Work Safe, the Office of Gas Safety, and the Environment Protection Authority. To the best of our knowledge Fiskville has always been compliant or able to comply with the requirements of these organisations.

While we believe that Fiskville today is a workplace which recognises the need to manage and minimise all HSE issues in the workplace, it is important that members of the Inquiry understand that managing these issues creates a real challenge in training and preparing fire-fighters to deal with the challenges and hazards they face in their workplace.

In a simple context it is easy to manage HSE issues, and it is easy to train fire-fighters. In a holistic context however, fire-fighters must be trained so that they fully understand fire behaviour, and can apply appropriate fire-fighting strategies and tactics in a safe and efficient manner in time critical, hostile, and hazardous operational situations.

This requires fires to be used in both closed and open environments and requires the use of varying types and quantities of fuel. It also requires different types and quantities of extinguishing mediums to be used, and it requires fire-fighters to respond to and suppress fires using a range of equipment and extinguishing agents.

While every effort is made to control the environment fire-fighters train in there is a need to expose fire-fighters to real flame, heat, smoke, and other hazards when conducting practical and hot fire training. This allows them to observe and experience how fuels, fires, and emissions behave, and to ensure they learn to protect themselves and others from the risks and hazards that are created during a fire or other emergency.

The Inquiry should acknowledge this to ensure fire-fighters and rescue personnel are best prepared to provide the service they do in protecting the community.

2. A study of the health impacts on employees, residents and visitors between 1970 and the present day.

In relation to health impacts on employees, residents, and visitors to Fiskville between 1970 and the present day, we respect the findings of the various medical reports which relate to Fiskville and to firefighting occupations. We also respect the medical records and similar submitted by any person in relation to this Inquiry.

We do not believe that we are in a position to comment on the long term health impacts of any person’s exposure to pollution, contamination, or work practices at Fiskville. We do believe however that any such impact should not be looked at in isolation, but should be examined with consideration of a range of relevant variables.

These include the norms of age, sex, family history, diet, and lifestyle choices etc. However as anyone living and working in Australia prior to the introduction of current workplace safety and dangerous goods legislation is likely to have been exposed to various levels of pollution, contaminants, and unsafe activities in their day to day activities we also believe that a person’s residential and employment history be considered as well. Any exposure in these contexts may have had an impact on a person’s health just as much as any association with Fiskville.

In relation to short term health impacts, anecdotal evidence and local knowledge suggests there has been little impact relating to respiratory or skin conditions or other health impacts suffered by people visiting Fiskville.

CFA protocols require personnel to report all occupational health and safety incidents and workplace hazards and Fiskville’s culture promotes this actively. This is particularly so with respect to staff and other personnel involved in practical and hot fire training.

To the best of our knowledge, even with this focus very few Occupational Health and Safety Incident Reports or Hazard Reports relating to an exposure or a health impact have been submitted by employees, residents or visitors during or immediately following their attendance at Fiskville.
We also have no knowledge of a “Fiskville Bug” which others claim afflicts people who have attended Fiskville in recent years.

As a staff group we can confidently say that we feel safe in our workplace. This applies even to those of us involved in training delivery and who work in locations and in roles where exposure to occupational health and safety incidents and hazards is perhaps most significant.

It also applies to those of us who have lived on site for both short term and extended periods.

3. **A study of the role of past and present executive management at Fiskville.**

   In relation to the role of executive management at Fiskville we believe that the focus of this level of management has always been to provide the best possible training for fire and rescue agencies in practical and hot fire training disciplines, incident management, specialist skills, and professional development.

   We are not always in agreement with the decisions of Fiskville management, and we accept that at times Fiskville management may have been complicit in introducing pollutants and contaminants to Fiskville, and in not eliminating practices which could be viewed as unsafe.

   However as stated earlier this needs to be contextualised and examined with reference to HSE requirements that were relevant at the time, and with the knowledge of HSE impacts that was available then.

   Accordingly, we believe that all personnel who have filled management positions at Fiskville have been focused on Fiskville’s role in training, and have acted in the best interests of Fiskville’s staff and its various user groups at all times.

   We would be surprised and disappointed if this is not the case.

   This confidence does not extend to CFA management at all levels however, which as evidenced by the discussion below, has not supported Fiskville to the level that we believe it should be supported.

   Until the early 1990s Fiskville was the CFA Training Wing. It was a flagship for training, viewed as a centre of excellence for training development and training delivery, and used as a testing ground to trial and test equipment, and develop and improve operating procedures.

   CFA restructures in 1991 and 1995 altered Fiskville’s role in training, and CFA management has subsequently reduced its focus on maintaining Fiskville as a training centre.

   While not always aware of the content of communications and reports exchanged between management at Fiskville and senior CFA managers, it is evident that CFA management has not been committed to maintaining Fiskville’s role in training.

   Examples of this lack of commitment are numerous, and include failure to commit to capital development; failure to maintain Fiskville’s existing infrastructure; accepting staffing shortfalls; and accepting that effective training can be delivered without providing and maintaining services and resources required to deliver effective training - including such things as a library/resource centre, fire-fighting appliances, ITC equipment, and classroom facilities.

   We believe that this lack of focus has helped create the myriad of challenges that Fiskville is faced with today, and that successive CFA Boards and executive managers have failed Fiskville, its staff and all its user groups by lacking vision and maintaining Fiskville as a centre of knowledge and training.

4. **An assessment of the feasibility of decontamination/rectification of the training site.**

   In relation to decontamination and rectification of the training site, we believe that this is non-negotiable.

   Failure to remediate the site will continue to expose people and the environment to contamination and if the site is not remediated there will be a need to implement and maintain ongoing security and maintenance programs at considerable cost to CFA and the broader community.
We believe however that the site should be remediated so that it can continue to be used as a practical and hot fire training facility.

A number of environmental reports on the site have been completed, and subject to verification of their findings all practicable measures should be made to remediate the site by removing, managing, or isolating all contamination and pollution to ensure the safe operation of the site.

Significant funds have already been allocated to works being undertaken to comply with EPA directions and notices, and these works should be completed in entirety.

Further remediation works should be initiated as required to support these works.

It is also essential that a water storage and treatment system be installed to provide a closed and self-sustained water supply to provide access to water supplies for fire-fighting training.

We accept that remediation of the site is a significant undertaking, however the remediation of other contaminated sites in Australia and around the world provide evidence that it is certainly achievable.

We understand the capital value of the land and buildings at Fiskville are in excess of $19M, and that $12.5M has been spent on capital works and remediation programs over the last three years.

We also understand the cost of replacing Fiskville with a training centre which offers similar facilities and opportunities to Fiskville is likely to be well on excess of $100M. (Addendum - 31 March 2015)

Given the budget restrictions facing all government agencies and the community the financial value of Fiskville should not be lost. Neither should funds spent on remediation works be wasted. We believe that the cost of building a new training centre cannot be justified given the current value of Fiskville and what it offers. The community should not be burdened with the costs of replacing a facility that provides everything that Fiskville does, and we believe the Inquiry should recommend that the Government take responsibility for ensuring the site is fully remediated and for engaging with all stakeholders to ensure this does occur.

5. Recommendations as necessary to mitigate ongoing harm and to provide justice to victims and their families.
In relation to mitigating ongoing harm, we believe that remediating the training site at Fiskville as previously discussed will achieve this.

In relation to providing justice to victims and their families, we believe there are two considerations.

Firstly, we believe that is unacceptable for a person or organisation to knowingly expose people or the environment to potential harm.

We also believe that it is unacceptable for any person or organisation to withhold information that identifies people or the environment are exposed to harm where this non-disclosure results in continued exposure, or where it prevents people making decisions or taking actions to alleviate the exposure.

We have no knowledge of any circumstance where this may have happened, however if the Inquiry finds otherwise we believe accountability should be attributed to people or organisations that may have done this.

Secondly, we believe that all victims should be provided with fair and reasonable compensation for any health related issue, economic loss, or other negative impact that is attributed to pollution, contamination, or unsafe activities at Fiskville.

In determining what is fair and reasonable however, consideration must be given to the nature and length of any exposure at Fiskville, and to the likelihood that this exposure contributed to a specific health or other issue.

Fiskville is not the cause of every respiratory or skin ailment, melanoma, nodule, or acute/chronic illness or disease reported by people who have worked at, visited, or been exposed to the site.
Many claims of exposure that we have heard or have seen in the media are exaggerated, mischievous, misleading, or false.

Examples of this include inferences and reports that people other than CFA employees were long-term instructors at Fiskville; that Fiskville shows no consideration for others when conducting hot fire training; that Fiskville has continued to burn unknown products in more recent years; that people suffer gastric illness and rashes every time they attend Fiskville; and that debris from activities at Fiskville impacts on other properties around Fiskville.

Accordingly we believe that justice in the form of medical support or other forms of compensation should be provided to victims and their families on a case-by-case basis, and subject to the exposure and the impact they attribute to Fiskville being verified.

When assessing compensation claims we also believe that consideration should also be given to the role a person played when they were exposed, and whether their exposure resulted from or was exacerbated by a deliberate decision or action on their part.

6. Role and relevance of VEMTC Fiskville in the local community and the Emergency Management Sector.

While not wishing to detract from the relevance of the Terms of Reference framed for this Parliamentary Inquiry we believe they are short-sighted in not calling for an examination of the role and relevance of VEMTC Fiskville within the local community and the broader Emergency Management Sector, both now and into the future.

Terms of Reference which focus on identifying and fixing practices and problems experienced in the past and present provide opportunity to ignore the many positive aspects of Fiskville’s operations over the years, some of which are unique to Fiskville and which may not be able to continue if Fiskville does not maintain its status as a hot fire training facility.

This is even more relevant given the decision made by the CFA Board earlier today to close Fiskville permanently. We believe that this decision is irrational and premature. We are told the decision has been made in the interests of our health and safety and that of others who may visit the site. We accept the importance of this, however we are also told the decision has been made in isolation and without consultation with any input from the Department of Health, Work Cover, or any other organisation that has expertise to provide advice in relation to this.

We would therefore submit that as well as providing recommendations to mitigate ongoing harm and to provide justice to victims of past practices, the inquiry adopt a broader role in its examination of Fiskville, and extend its scope to make recommendations which relate to the important and unique role Fiskville plays in both the local community and the Emergency Management Sector.

Local Community

Fiskville is an iconic location in the Shire of Moorabool. It has significant historical importance due to its association with Sir Ernest Fisk and its role as a long distance radio communication station when part of the Imperial Wireless Chain operated by Amalgamated Wireless (Australasia) Ltd.

The property is now subject to a heritage overlay, and several buildings and other features on site are listed by Heritage Victoria and the Department of Transport, Planning, and Local Infrastructure.

CFA plays a significant role in preserving and maintaining this heritage.

Since its acquisition by CFA in the 1972, Fiskville has become an increasingly important part of the communities of Ballan and the surrounding towns and settlements.

Fiskville is a focal point in the small community of Mount Wallace and provides employment opportunities for both male and female residents within their immediate local area. It has introduced new members to the community, provides a social hub, and at various times and to different levels has enhanced the viability of local clubs and schools.

This influence has extended into the wider communities of Ballan and the Moorabool Shire, and as Fiskville has grown so has its social and economic impact on these communities grown.
Fiskville is the largest employer in the Ballan area, employing over 80 people, 55 of whom live within the local area. Limited other employment opportunities exist in this area and without employment at Fiskville some families may be forced out of the community in search of employment, or forced to survive with assistance from social welfare programs.

The salaries of employees, the use of local businesses by Fiskville, and spending within the local community by guests and visitors to Fiskville helps ensure the viability of local businesses which in turn provides further employment opportunities and stimulus for growth in economic, social, and personal welfare terms.

We believe that both Fiskville’s historic past and its continued operation and growth is integral to maintaining and developing the local community, and it is important that the Inquiry recognises this when making its recommendations.

Emergency Management Sector

Just as Fiskville has helped local communities in the Ballan area grow and develop, so too has it helped in developing the Emergency Management Sector in Victoria and Australia.

Fiskville has evolved from being a simple training venue with limited infrastructure which conducted a handful of basic courses in its early days, to a highly complex practical and hot fire training centre today.

A total of 5594 CFA members participated in training courses or other activities at Fiskville in 2014. These included:
- Recruit fire-fighter courses of 16 weeks duration;
- Development courses for Leading Fire-fighters and Station officers of three weeks duration;
- Leading Fire-fighter and Station Officer Workshops and Assessments;
- Professional development courses for staff, career fire-fighters, and volunteers;
- Incident management courses for staff, career fire-fighters, and volunteers;
- Hazardous materials courses for career fire-fighters and volunteers;
- On road, off road, and driver development courses for staff, career fire-fighters, and volunteers;
- Specialist skills acquisition and skills maintenance courses for career fire-fighters, and volunteers, including courses in:
  - Structural fire-fighting;
  - Bushfire fire-fighting;
  - Compressed air breathing apparatus operation;
  - Technical rescue;
  - Road accident rescue;
  - Fire investigation;
- Workshops and conferences for members of all CFA Directorates and Departments:

While not all these courses were conducted at Fiskville it is clearly the preferred site due to its residential capacity and efficiencies.

Cost savings are significant in running CFA courses at Fiskville as illustrated by the costs associated with running Recruit Courses. It is our understanding that the 2014 budget allocation for 25 recruits to complete a course at Fiskville was approximately $1.6M, while the estimate for 30 recruits to complete a course at VEMTC Craigieburn this year is in excess of $3.0M.

Funding for the fire service in Victoria is a significant issue. The Fire Service Levy has a significant impact on all Victorians and given this our fire agencies must be managed as efficiently as possible. Allocating funds as above is irresponsible, and the cost advantages associated with continuing to conduct courses at Fiskville must be considered by the Inquiry in the interests of all Victorians.

The role of Fiskville cannot be captured in statistics alone however as they ignore the fabric of Fiskville as a workplace and the impact it has on the entity that is CFA.

Fiskville is a central plank of the CFA and sits right at its emotional and spiritual core.
- It is home to the CFA annual memorial service and the fire-fighters memorial which recognises the sacrifice of CFA members who have died attending fires and incidents;
• It is a focal point for the family which is CFA, and provides a venue that helps bring all members together for its various gatherings and workshops in pursuit of a common cause;

• It is accepted as a venue available to all members to access and utilise when searching for reference or guidance on any subject;

• It is a home away from home for all CFA career fire-fighters during their recruit course and graduation, and is cornerstone in every step in their subsequent development and career progression;

• It is central to the viability of CFA’s volunteer fire-fighters and fire brigades, and provides the chief venue for state level conferences and workshops while at all times remaining a venue for training for volunteers from across the state; and

• It is the Field Training Ground for volunteer and career fire-fighters from the Districts 7 (Geelong), 14 (Melton) and 15 (Ballarat).

Fiskville also provides unique advantages as a training venue in comparison to other training centres. These include:

• Its existing infrastructure which has unique characteristics and potential when compared with other venue, including:
  o Its residential capacity and its hospitality centre, which allow cost-effective training to be conducted in a family friendly, rural environment, free of distractions and conducive to effective learning. This provides opportunity for members to extend their learning following formal training sessions via group study and networking opportunities, and provides access to on-site equipment and resources after normal hours. It also provides a family-friendly environment for interstate and international visitors and students who can remain on site before, during, and following training;
  o Its teaching centre and classroom facilities, which include a large auditorium and unique rotating TEWT Table to facilitate table-top exercises involving all types and scale of emergencies;
  o Its hot fire training areas, including flammable liquids, LPG, and structural fire training PADs. The structural PAD includes a Fire Investigation training facility which provides the only facility in Victoria for members of CFA and other agencies - including the Victoria Police Arson Squad, the Victoria Police Forensic Services Unit, the Victorian Association of Fire Investigators, and various universities and research bodies to use when conducting training and research into structural fire causation and fire investigation;
  o Its practical training areas, which provide access to a comprehensive range of training props many of which are unique to Fiskville, eg: the light aeroplane and derailed railway props. These facilities allow members of CFA and other agencies to train together in large scale multi-agency incidents;
  o Its extensive network of plantations, which provide on-site access to different vegetation and fuel types, and which provide on-site locations which can be used in bushfire training courses;
  o Its grounds and maintenance facilities, which allow maintenance issues to be attended to immediately and efficiently;
  o Its capacity to sustain training for extended periods with reduced availability of utility services due to the size and nature of its facilities, and the availability of bulk supplies and redundant services;
  o The Victoria University Fire Test Facility, which can be used in partnership with Victoria University and other bodies to conduct training and enables research into fire behaviour and fire suppression in a controlled environment.

• Its size of approximately 140 hectares provides unmatched opportunity to conduct training activities which include the impacts of time and space on emergency incidents;

• It is not landlocked, and has unlimited scope for development;
Its location allows for practical and hot fire training to be conducted without impacting on large numbers of people in residential areas;

It provides a training and research site for a range of external clients and 889 members of agencies and organisations other than CFA attended Fiskville for a training or similar event in 2014.

Agencies which use Fiskville today or have used Fiskville in the past include educational institutes and groups from commerce and industry, groups from other emergency service and support agencies including Victoria Police; the State Emergency Service; the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning; Ambulance Victoria; the Australian Red Cross; and a range of state and federal law enforcement and security agencies and defence force agencies.

Fiskville is a particularly attractive site for members of security and law enforcement agencies. The site is secure and controlled, and allows the agencies to control and manage potential health, safety, and environmental exposures while conducting training they could not conduct in other venues.

This training can involve sensitivities that make it difficult to undertake in more public locations. It can also relate to civic, state and national security which is particularly important given global political tensions and the heightened security levels in force around the world.

Numerous examples of the use of this type of training can be provided if required, and since the suspension of operations at Fiskville in March this year some agencies who use Fiskville for this type of training have already been in contact asking when they will be able to resume the training they have been doing here.

To ignore the advantages Fiskville has to offer is illogical. We believe that failing to take advantage of them is ethically and financially irresponsible given the increasing training needs of emergency service agencies, the unique opportunities that Fiskville provides as a training facility, and the cost of replacing it with a like-for-like facility.

Conclusion.
The unique advantages Fiskville provides as a training venue should not be overlooked by the Parliamentary Inquiry, the Government, or any organization or individual with an interest in preventing emergencies or protecting members of the community during emergency events.

Rather than focus on past practices, looking for potential scape-goats, and considering the benefits of closing or scaling down operations at Fiskville, we believe the Inquiry should consider the feasibility of enhancing and extending operations at Fiskville in the interests of all Australians.

We therefore believe that this Inquiry should look beyond the past and the present and provide a vision for the future.

This vision should include:

- The full remediation of the site to remove all residual pollutants and contaminants to enable practical and hot fire training to resume at Fiskville as soon as practicable.

- The provision of a closed and self-contained water supply that allows water to be captured and stored on site, and treated so that it eliminates all health, safety, and environmental exposure and provides access to water supplies for fire-fighting training.

- Enhancement of the current training infrastructure to allow all emergency service agencies to train together to achieve common competencies and operate in an enhanced inter-agency environment so that they are better prepared to prevent and respond to all hazards and risks which threaten communities in Australia and around the world.

- Enhancement of Victoria University’s Fire Test Facility by way of the installation of emission control and decontamination systems to provide capacity for fire agencies, research agencies, insurance companies, and commercial organisations to form partnerships and conduct genuine and effective research into fire behaviour and fire suppression.
Staff members at Fiskville are passionate about Fiskville and its role, and we believe that it has an important role to play well into the future.

In saying this we accept that some people, including some members of CFA, might not accept all our views.

This is not CFA’s submission however, it is our submission. It has been prepared without prejudice in the hope that the Inquiry will see beyond the past and present and into the future, and see the future for Fiskville that we see.

To support our submission we would welcome the opportunity to meet with members of the Inquiry at Fiskville so that we can show them Fiskville as we know it, show them the potential that it has, provide documentation and other forms of evidence which might assist the Inquiry, and encourage the members to share our vision for Fiskville’s future.

In doing this the Inquiry will do justice to Fiskville and ensure its legacy does not focus on negative perceptions that relate to Fiskville’s past.

Rather it will relate to its future, and will provide inspiration to everyone to use the challenges of the past to build a better and brighter future.

Yours sincerely,

Members of Staff
VEMTC Fiskville.

Fiskville Leadership Team

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