

(a) **An assessment of the resourcing requirements to ensure Victoria is appropriately equipped and fire ready;**

The current issue relating to assigning appropriate support through resourcing within areas supported by the CFA is that the resources are restricted to deployment according to present restrictive union directives. The ability of the CFA to move resources to areas that need support through means of temporary assignment is too restrictive. There is a need to be more consultative and flexible as to the deployment / assignment of staff who are there to support our community based fire service, grown from volunteers.

(b) **How CFA and MFB staff can be best supported in protecting communities, taking into consideration operational needs, as well as Occupational Health and Safety best practices and best training methods;**

The use of volunteers within integrated brigades is undervalued and not utilised as a means to stop gap short falls in staffing capacity / capability to shift manning due to operational or personal ability to attend particular shifts. Continued funding and support to regional Training Centres to support Volunteer Training by reducing travel times required by volunteers to obtain advanced training.

(c) **The interoperability between the CFA and MFB;**

The ability to provide training and interaction between CFA and MFB personnel should be encouraged and promoted. This should extent equally to both volunteer and career personnel. The adoption of AIIMS as a standard approach to emergency management will move both agencies to work on the same platform and provide consistency in service delivery.

(d) **The interoperability across fire agencies responsible for preventing and suppressing all types of fire in Victoria, whether on public or private land;**

This infers that the inquiry would review the public land fire prevention and suppression and will also consider the impact and capacity with regard to all other terms of reference. Considering the gains that have been achieved through integrating training of all agencies within the same courses will greatly further this cause.

(e) **CFA and MFB management structures and management work structures;**

These appear to be conflicting and unsupportive of having a fire prevention / suppression delivery service these as like the delivery of the services need to be bought in line with the delivery practices remembering that the CFA career service is there to largely support the volunteer organisation it is.

(f) **Enhancing workplace culture, including fostering greater respect and cooperation between management and its workforce, as well as enhancing workplace innovation and diversity;**

Consultation and communication.....

Defining a culture to live and work within, then publishing and promoting the same, without first gaining the buy in from those that are to promote it is flawed. Not an easy task across tens of thousands of members, but not unachievable either. Whilst we have a hierarchical command structure, developing a culture of respect and willingness to work to our common purpose and cause together should not be unattainable either.

It is also important to mention Key aspects of the Volunteer Charter includes:

- recognition that the CFA is first and foremost a volunteer-based organisation, where volunteers are supported by paid staff in a fully integrated manner;
- a requirement that the CFA must recognise, value, respect and promote the contribution of volunteers to the wellbeing and safety of the community;
- a requirement that the government and the CFA consult with Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria on behalf of CFA volunteers on any matter that might reasonably be expected to affect them;
- a requirement that the CFA, in performing its functions, has regard to the commitment and principles set out in the Volunteer Charter; and
- a responsibility on the CFA to develop policy and organisational arrangements that maintain and strengthen the capacity of volunteers.

(g) Options for the establishment of a Career Firefighters Registration Board; and

Should the need to establish a Career Firefighters Registration Board be required, the terms, reference and capacity of the Board would need to be published for discussion and acceptance by the volunteer members due to the inference that there is again a distinction between the Career and Volunteer capability and training. When all career courses are made available to volunteers and those qualifications are recognised such that they may also be registered a Board of this nature would do nothing but promote division and undervalue the volunteer capability.

(h) The best mechanism to provide support for volunteer fire brigades and to ensure their viability in providing emergency services.

Firstly remembering that the career structure for CFA was introduced to support the Volunteer organisation that is the CFA. Accordingly we need this inquiry to be open to adapting the use and deployment of staff / career personnel to again supporting brigades where the needs are identified. There are many service delivery organisations that are adaptive and structured that the delivery is provided through a mobile, adaptive and reactive workforce.