

Fire Services Review

Rob Keiller CFA member [REDACTED]

Myamyn Brigade, Heywood Group
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I am a CFA volunteer member with 16 years experience. I am currently the 2nd Lieutenant of the Myamyn Brigade.

The Myamyn brigade is a rural brigade which has very little or no interaction with the MFB. My observation during the past 4 or 5 years is the provision of training, equipment and buildings has been at an all time high.

This has improved safety for all volunteers with crew protection now on all trucks, availability of training has increased, communication systems have improved and sheds now have improved facilities including toilets.

The additional funding for the smaller brigades have definitely made it much easier to attract new volunteers.

The distinction between the CFA and MFB has worked well in rural areas for many years. A merger of the two bodies is likely to result in a shift in the power base from volunteers to career members.

I would not like to see funds currently allocated to the CFA being reduced. Any reallocation of funding from the CFA to pay for additional career firefighters would result in less training for rural volunteers and reduced funding for equipment and building upgrades. This would lead to reduction in the number of volunteers at a time when it is important to attract younger volunteers to replace the current ageing volunteers.

It is important small rural brigades continue to exist. Rural communities should not be placed at risk having to wait for trucks to arrive from distant larger towns and cities. Lives are more valuable than making changes for the sake of making changes.

My wish is for the importance of a very efficient CFA is recognised and is not diminished in anyway by pressure from other bodies.