

SUBMISSION OF BARRY WILSON

1. I, Barry Wilson, Leading Firefighter (**LFF**)with the Metropolitan Brigade and Fire Services Board (**MFB**), [REDACTED], in the State of Victoria, say as follows:
2. I have been employed by the MFB for 33 years. I am recently retired but held the rank of LFF for 23 years.
3. As well as holding the rank of LFF I hold the following qualifications/memberships:
 - i. Rescue operator
 - ii. Urban Search and rescue technician
 - iii. Swift water rescue technician
 - iv. Marine operator
 - v. Coxswain
4. I have also received Chief Fire Officers award for the Thredbo Landslide rescue, a national medal and Long service award for 30 years of service.

Morale at Work

5. I feel that the morale at work has decreased during the Napthine Government (2010 – 2014) as a result of the consistent attacks on firefighters both publicly (in the media) and within. Also, with the Government not passing the presumptive legislation when it had a chance, I feel that they let firefighters down and sent a clear message that firefighter welfare was not a priority.
6. The morale in the workforce has also lowered due to the CFA failing to honour its agreements due to the MFB then following their conduct. This has made firefighters feel that their senior leaders cannot be trusted to keep their agreements.

Equipment and Staffing

7. I do believe that the standards of equipment and operational response have decreased during the Napthine Government. Compared to interstate practices and equipment I feel that our equipment and appliances have not kept pace. For example, the specialised rescue areas have gone backward compared to NSW and Queensland.
8. Staffing is also currently not adequate to protect the Victorian Community and firefighters. All primary appliances must be staffed by four professional firefighters minimum and the level of equipment on these appliances must keep pace with the outside environment.

Interoperability

9. I have experienced issues with interoperability between the CFA and MFB.

10. I would like to see increased interoperability by increased liaising and training between the services, both professional and volunteer. A more combined fire service is the only benefit in the State of Victoria.

Senior Management

11. There has been an evident disconnect between Senior Management in the fire services.

12. I have lost all trust and confidence in senior management. I feel that recent appointments to Senior Management, particularly those under the period of the Napthine Government, were designed to implement a ongoing attack and to lower morale in the workplace.

13. I feel that many of the current senior managers have been appointed with the sole purpose of seeking to create disharmony with the union and its members.

14. Also, because of the way the appointments to these roles have occurred (with little transparency and accountability), I do not believe that the relationship of trust and confidence can be repair.

15. I believe the relationship can be repaired only if the current ranks within senior staff is replaced and senior staff are held accountable for their actions.



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Barry Wilson

Date: 5 August 2015