

Thanks for allowing members of the Fire service to comment on what the future holds for the members of the TFS with regards to the Fire Service Act.

I have been an operational Firefighter since 2000 and have been a Station Officer since 2015. I have seen a large change in our job, our role and believe I have a good understanding of what our job entails and what the future may hold.

I have answered the questions within this Act review to the best of my ability, I found some of the topics difficult due to them being more effected at senior management level budgeting, legislation or not aware of the situation, or how the topic effects the Fire Service.

If there is any confusions or my answer are hard to understand please contact me for clarification.

I am willing to assist and put my hand up to assist the review panel as the Tasmanian Fire Service moves into the future

1. The first item I would like to comment on is the member's appointed to change and make decisions about the work the Firefighters do employed in the TFS. I have provided this list below at dot point 2

All members appointed do not operationally do the job at the incident, fire front or seen in the public eye. Some members have come from an operational back ground however I do not believe the panel understand and comprehend what our job now involves

I am not sure of the next step after this point but I would like to see some Operational staff consulted so we can explain to the review team what actually happens on the front line.

2. The Review of the Act will be overseen by a Steering Committee consisting of:

An independent Chair;

Chief Officer, Tasmania Fire Service;

Deputy Chief Officer, Tasmania Fire Service;

Deputy Secretary, Business and Executive Services, DPFEM;

Director, State Emergency Service;

A representative of the Department of Premier and Cabinet;

A representative of the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment;

A representative of the Department of State Growth;

A representative of the Department of Treasury and Finance.

Review Question 1

Should the purpose of the legislation more accurately reflect the range of activities undertaken?

Unsure Understand moving forward is a good thing. Some good discussions will need to be had about this topic

Review Question 2

How should legislation validate the delivery of the current range of non-fire services that communities and government expect TFS to deliver?

Unsure. Again good conversations need to be had

Review Question 3

Do TFS firefighters have a role in Emergency Medical Response and, if so, should that role be reflected in legislation.

No As listed on pages 7,8 and 9 career Firefighters have a huge role and capacity to maintain. Adding the role of Emergency medical response will require more training to a higher level. This is hard enough to maintain and train our senior FF to a higher level in some of our current skills.

We continueally ask for future development of officers, driving instructors, first aid instructors, confined space USAR and now you are thinking of adding another role to our currently full capacity of traing. We currently do our best to maintain out current skills to the highest level we have. Medical response may work on the mainland in the major

centres. In Tasmania the career stations in Burnie Devonport Launceston and Hobart, do not have the capacity to fulfil this role

Taking a full TFS career crew to patients where an ambulance or other means would be required to transfer the patient to hospital would not be a viable response. This training and money would be better put into TAS Ambulance to assist their response to the Tasmanian public.

We have the skills for first aid to help at a car accident, bleeding, fractures cpr and defibrillation. I believe there is a need for crews to assist with CPR and defibrillation to assist in this area. There is also the deflib registration of defibrillators around the state of Tasmania that can assist with defibrillating a member of the public.

I would not like to see career crews responding to emergency medical assist.

Our rate payers within major centres pay for fire response whether that be structure fire, bush fire Road Crash Rescue or other emergency.

Not only do we have to maintain our current skills but we have train and educate our fire fighters as they move through their pay point schedule

Review Question 4

Should the State Emergency Service be included in the new legislation and removed from the Emergency Management Act in order to support personnel in emergency management.

As stated on page 12 - Annual resourcing for the SES is now incorporated into the State Fire Commission budget.

If the SES is to continue under the TFS budget, then the TFS should be compensated for this. The general public fire service levy would not cover the full response for the TFS and maintain the SES budget.

Do the SES still receive grants and funding from their local councils? If this is the case. Why does the TFS also have to fund them?

Review Question 6

Should the legislation provide PWS and forest officers with appropriate legislative authority to undertake fire control work and reflect contemporary Tasmanian practice in relation to Inter-Agency Incident Management?

Yes having all agencies on the same page would be an advantage.

Review Question 7

Should the State Fire Commission remain as a Statutory Authority?

The Chief of the Tasmanian Fire Service should have the power to make decisions without having to consult with Secretary, DPFEM, The Chief should have ultimate responsibility of how and where money can be spent. Functional Officers (District Officers of the TFS) are told there isn't any money in the budget for certain building upgrades, New building in Launceston, training, etc, There doesn't seem to be any consultation from Senior managers about moving forward and planning for the future. Whether that be 12 months or 5-10 20 year plan.

Review Question 8

Should the State Fire Commission have the role of a governing Board?

Unsure

Review Question 9

Should members of the Commission be appointed as representatives of their organisation or on the basis of skills/knowledge that they possess?

If the Commission want to go down this track then consultation needs to happen. All parties need to agree with what is being proposed before a change is made.

Review Question 10

What should be the State Fire Commission's role and function and should it include the strategic policy setting and administrative oversight of the State Emergency Service.

The Role of the SFC should be to oversee the TFS response to emergency incidents Community protection and safety. Preparedness, prevention, Building safety and consultation, Building and maintaining vehicles There could be other areas but I can't think of them.

The SES should have it's own strategic policy program and guidelines.

Review Question 11

What structural arrangements would best allow the Commission and TFS to achieve their objectives while operating in a departmental environment?

Unsure

Review Question 12

How should the Chief Officer be appointed and to whom is he responsible?

Not sure what is the best policy or procedure for appointing the Chief Officer but should be appointed by normal application and interview procedures, appointed for a 2 year term and then required to reapply every 2 years after that.

He should be responsible for all elements that is directly related to or effects the TFS.

Review Question 13

Should it still be specified that the Chief Officer is to have expertise and experience in fire service administration and in the management of fire-fighting operations?

Yes the Chief Officer of the TFS should have an operational background.

Do you think the Police will approve a previous CEO of Taswater to run TasPolice?

Bringing in a CEO who has experience in running a large company does not understand the requirements of operation firefighting. They will never understand what our job is or what our job entails.

The TFS Chief can be the manager of SES and have a SES Director or deputy with an emergency service back ground.

Review Question 14

How should potential tensions between the roles and accountabilities of the Chief Officer TFS, the Director SES and the State Controller be best resolved?

This is confusing in it's self.

The tensions between these organisations and Senior managers should be clear as to who reports to who, who is accountable under who and listed. BES, IT, HR and People and Culture should support all managers and employees in all their respective areas.

Review Question 15

What is the appropriate role and function of the SFMC and what should the relationship be with the State Fire Commission/TFS?

The SFMC is a consultative part of the organisation that reports the risk of bush fire prone areas and fire management areas that needs to be looked at.
The SFMC be given similar responsibility or be rolled with FRU.

Review Question 16

What is the appropriate membership of the SFMC and should the membership be prescribed in legislation?

No Change

Review Question 17

Should the State Fire Management Council have the power to appoint permit officers?

Yes or Senior Managers of their respective organisation

Review Question 18

Are the Fire Management Areas and the composition of the Fire Management Area Committees still appropriate?

Yes believe so

Review Question 19

What opportunities exist to streamline Fire Management Area Committees with Emergency Management Committees?

Unsure

As Career brigades are backing up to neighbouring towns for example in Launceston, the Launceston Fire Brigade support, Dilston, Lilydale, Perth, Longford, Evandale should these rate payer have their fire service levy altered as they are getting a better more professional response from a career brigade. Nothing against the Volunteers in these areas but we are now responding to more calls out side of Launceston to what we used to 20 years ago.

MAIB Funding

Page 33 - The receives an annual allocation of \$300,000 per annum from the MAIB to support road crash rescue capacity.

Does the TFS see any of this money some of our equipment is over 10 years old and should have been replaced by now. We constantly are told there is no money to upgrade our RCR equipment. According to this statement our RCR equipment should be the latest on the trucks. Operating with 10 year old RCR cutter and spreaders in not appropriate

Review Question 20

Should fire and emergency services be funded through a single mechanism? If so, what is the appropriate model?

Unsure

Review Question 21

Should SES centrally manage and fund its volunteer unit facilities, its fleet and its operational expenses

Yes but if the fire service is also funding them repairing their vehicle fleet then they are double dipping

Review Question 22

Should any new legislation bind the Crown?

Review Question 23

How should response, command and control arrangements be handled in new legislation?

The land tenure should dictate who manages the incident.

Whoever is the IC and they do not hold the current skills and competence of the incident they should hand over the IC role to the TFS

Review Question 24

Should the Chain of Command be included in legislation with accountabilities included?

Yes

Review Question 25

Should endorsement of Incident Controllers be legislated? Making it clear that all emergency responders present at an incident are in all respects subject to the Incident Controller's direction or should Incident Controllers be endorsed through policy?

Yes IC have a responsibility and they should adhere to it. If they are called to court or coroners inquest they need to be accountable for their actions

Review Question 26

Are the provisions relating to the establishment and composition of brigades still appropriate?

Yes this is still a requirement

Review Question 27

Should Industry Brigades be recognised in legislation and have the ability to assist in emergency response outside the industry boundaries?

Yes, if they hold current skills and competence why not.

Review Question 28

Should the Act be amended to specify these activities are exempt from the provisions of the LUPAA?

Yes

Review Question 29

Are the provisions relating to the declaration of Total Fire Bans still appropriate?

Yes

Review Question 30

Should Community Education be an explicit function of SFC/TFS and should it include the SES?

Some discussion needs to be had in this area unsure what is the best method moving forward.

Review Question 31

Is it still appropriate that TFS issues permits to install, maintain or repair fire protection equipment?

Yes I believe the TFS can hold and maintain this function.

Review Question 32

Should there be a whole of government Emergency Evacuation System that deals with all threats, not just fire risks, in the built environment?

Yes

Should prescribed buildings be categorised by risk potential?

Yes

Review Question 33

Are the current levels and structure of penalties appropriate?

Yes the penalties need to be followed through. Infringement notices need to be acted on.

Earlier this year I recommended to charge a resident for lighting a fire in his back yard on a day of a total fire ban day. This was not acted on and he wasn't charged. If an officer places in his report that the resident or occupier to be charged then this should be followed through. If the resident is doing the wrong thing with fire or other material then they should be fined. As our environment changes and cancer is the cause of materials being burnt then those who do the wrong thing needs to be acted on.

Review Question 34

Are there other offences that should be considered for inclusion in new legislation?

There are a number of areas where people do the wrong thing and this needs to be acted on. Who is going to do this?

Is the Fire Service going to employ infringement Officers?

Review Question 35

Are the current protection from liability provisions appropriate?

I guess this is the reason why the Act is being looked at. At all times, as fire fighters we are always acting in good faith for the members of the public.

Final dot point

- There isn't any procedure or formula in the TFS where a new station should be developed. Ie if a community has a population of 25-30000 or more and has the potential to grow then a career station should be considered so the TFS can provide the best response to the general public.

Conclusion

Sometimes we can change thing for the better, On the other hand if it is still working ok and the procedure functions well, then why change it.

By changing things doesn't mean we will make it better.

Thanks again if you wish to contact me you can email me or ph.



