



TASMANIAN VOLUNTEER FIRE BRIGADES ASSOCIATION

"As the representative body of members, the Association will advance and support their interests, well-being and skills."

State President

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State Secretary

Ian Wheeler
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To Whom It May Concern,

Thank you for granting an extension to the submission date 28 Feb 2025 for the Establishing the State Fire and Emergency Services Commission (TFES Reforms) and for the extra consultation via the Position Paper – Establishing the State Fire and Emergency Services Commission presentation to the TVFBA 20 January 2025.

We note with concern the continual reference to “the board” in the 20 January document and found this confusing. Our response continues to use the term “Commission” as our preferred position. Our response is outlined below. It is not to be considered our final position on the reforms nor used to endorse any proposed reform. We look forward to being involved in further consultation on this matter.

We are pleased to note that the SFESC will remain a statutory body. We hope that this will ensure the autonomy and freedom to operate in the best interests of the Tasmanian community is preserved. We still note, however, that the Commission will remain a part of DPFEM and not be a stand-alone organisation. We feel this may lead to undue influence being placed on the Commission by those with no vested interest in the smooth operation of the Commission.

We still have questions about the selection criteria for a skills-based Commission, in particular, the ability of an appointed Commission to understand and engage with a TFES workforce that is largely composed of volunteers. This is less of a problem with a representative body such as the TVFBA. We look forward to viewing the position descriptions and appointment process for positions on the Commission, as time goes on.

We note that representation may be achieved by the creation of sub-committees (1 for the Associations and 1 for the SFMC), however we are concerned about the influence these subcommittees may have in any decision making progress, how well they are “kept in the loop” on matters affecting the Associations membership or the wider community, and whether they can be dissolved at the whim of the Minister of the day.

Thankyou for this opportunity to be involved in the process of reform and we reaffirm our commitment to the need to bring about this reform. We reiterate our position that any reform must be for the good of the wider community and not disadvantage in any way the members of the TVFBA. To this end we eagerly anticipate seeing the yet to be released Volunteer Charter that we hope will protect the rights of volunteers in the TFES.

We also look forward to continuing in the consultation process regarding the proposed reforms. After all we are “Better Together”

Yours Sincerely

Rob Atkins AFSM
State President
TVFBA