



The Hon Tony Piccolo MP
Minister for Emergency Services
GPO Box 668
ADELAIDE SA 5001

Dear Minister,

Response from Region 1 Operations Brigade Volunteers to ES Sector Reform.

We are writing in response to the proposed Emergency Service Sector Reform.

As Minister, you indicated in the forums and through the discussion paper – A Safer Community that the changes to the Sector will not impact volunteers at brigade level and that the changes will occur to the organisation from Regional level and above.

We take this opportunity to highlight to the Minister that there are a number of volunteer brigades that are directly linked to the operation of CFS Regions.

The Region 1 Operations Brigade reports directly to the Regional Commander and supports the Region in the following ways;

- Provides additional staffing of the Regional Coordination Centre during emergencies and on Total Fire Ban Days
- Provides support to the Region by supplying incident management personnel for the management of incidents beyond the capability of the Region's brigades and groups
- Provides operational support through the provision of Staging Area Management

During the 2013/2014 bushfire season the Brigade volunteered over 6000hrs in direct support to CFS operations not only in Region 1 but across the State. Members were deployed to manage fires undertaking a variety of roles including Incident Controller, Operations Officer, Planning Officer and Logistics Officer as well as numerous other support roles within the incident management structure.

The Region 1 Operations brigade has a very strong and committed membership and attracts volunteers with a high degree of knowledge and experience in managing emergencies across multiple agencies.

The Brigade's membership includes past CFS Brigade Captains and Group Officers, members of SAPOLs emergency and major events section, former military personnel, local government Councillors, Health SA Emergency Managers, current SES volunteers, DEWNR personnel and media managers to list but a few.

The extensive knowledge and experience contained within the Brigade that supports effective multi-agency operational response must be maintained in any future Regional ESO structure. The Brigade provides a critical contingency for Regional staffing as well as vital frontline incident management.





In addition, many Brigade members provide support to the CFS training department through their involvement in the delivery of multi-agency incident management training not only within Region 1 but across the State.

As our brigade does not fit within the general structure of the standard Brigade and Groups, we wish to draw your attention to the 'position' that Operation Support Brigades hold and ask that any consideration of change take into account these facts. As Minister, we wish to highlight the significant amount of training and operational response undertaken by the Region 1 Operations Brigade and to seek support from the Minister in continuing with the model of volunteers working alongside staff at the Regional level.

We invite the Minister to attend one of our Brigade training nights to gain a better appreciation of the work we undertake. We meet every Wednesday night from 19:30 at Region 1 Headquarters, Gawler St, Mt Barker.

Yours Sincerely,

Members' of the Region 1 Operations Brigade

24/10/2014

