

27 OCT 2014

**Labbozzetta, Joe (DCS)**

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**From:**  
**Sent:** Friday, 24 October 2014 12:44 PM  
**To:** DCS:Minister Piccolo  
**Cc:** SASES Whyalla  
**Subject:** South Australian Emergency Services Sector Reform

Good Afternoon,

Dear Minister Tony Piccolo

I would like to take an opportunity to write to you with some of my concerns re the Sector Review.

Whilst there are some things I agree with, some partly agree & some total disagree with.

The first question I asked myself was, how was I going to be affected?

Simply I don't think that I will be terribly affected due to getting very tired and thinking about retiring from the Emergency Services.

The next question was, how is it going to affect my community?

I feel that would be some impact on the community, as there would be an exit of a large number of Volunteers, as they see the latest model suiting SAMFS more than the SACFS/SASES volunteers. (they may choose to leave their Service)

We already have a situation where the Retained Fire Fighters here in Whyalla aren't trained to the same level as us the volunteers in General Rescue, Road Crash Rescue & Storm/Flood Operations (this is by their own omissions).

We the volunteers trainers have offered training to the SAMFS when we were/are running training courses, the local SAMFS Officers have welcomed this but have been directed by their Commander and above NO you can't attend.

Currently if the SAMFS leaves Whyalla (attend RCR) with two appliances they generally take quite some time in filling a third crew straight away, then we as a community have up to an hour wait before a fire crew arrives from Pt. Augusta (change of quarters) (I am aware that we the volunteer Brigades/Units at times also have issues filling crews).

Where this is a problem, then maybe just having one Emergency Service serving the community would be more suitable.

The WA model hasn't worked well for SES volunteers with less Training, Operational support, Equipment Purchase/support & less Funding.

The Victorian model isn't as bad but still has a number of short falls as far as training, equipment & training compared to Victorian MFB & CFA.

Don't agree with.

Losing our own District Officers level, they have the understanding of the Units, Districts, Legislation, incident management just to name a few, if we were to lose our own trained District Officers and be replaced by someone from another service/back ground then they would need to be held accountable in all aspects. The feeling is that an Officer from a back ground MFS would favour the MFS, CFS = CFS and SES = SES.

Reduce Emergency Service Spending:

Suggestions:

We currently have three Emergency Services, each with, IT Dept, WHS Dept, HR Dept, Vehicle Workshop could be made into one of these Dept to service all three services.

Close some unproductive (low tasking numbers)/duplication stations, brigades & units eg.

- SAMFS – Kapunda, close. Still have Kapunda SACFS & SASES
- SAMFS – Kadina, close. Still have Kadina SACFS
- SAMFS – Moonta, Close. Still have a number of Brigades in the area SACFS
- SAMFS – Peterborough, close. Still have Peterborough SACFS
  
- SASES – Wudinna, close. Still have Wudinna SACFS
- SASES – Cummins, close. Still have Cummins SACFS
  
- SACFS – Salisbury, close. Still have Salisbury, Elizabeth SAMFS
- SACFS – Dalkieth, close. Still have Elizabeth, Gawler SAMFS

SAMFS need to remain in Regional built up areas' and not travel greater than 30km outside the Regional Post Office. (Whyalla SAMFS does, unless it's to cover a call's to Pt. Bonython (Santos) or an appliance for fire cover at an incident).

Whilst I understand that there needs to be change, we need to cut cost, save money, do more with less etc. I get that but change has to be for the right reason, the country communities don't suffer or have reduce service's and if there are volunteers they are not burdened with unnecessary red tape.

I guess in summary SASES has been through a number of reviews and each one has seen some changes, the benefit of these reviews and restructures seem now we have the right people in the right position. I believe that if the current structure is implemented, then a large number of volunteers will leave their service, taking a wealth of knowledge & experience with them thus will reduce the service provided to their community.

In the country area's if this was to happen then with most country people having the attitude to help those in time of need, would then mean we would have a lot of non-organised support which may put people at risk if emergency situations.

In situations of emergencies all three services do work well together as having a common cause, however if we were to be blend into an organisation then I feel day to day incidents may not cover/assist the communities as well.

I have been with the emergency services for nearly 34 years,!

I trust that your decisions you make will ensure the safety of the South Australian communities, not only in the Metropolitan but also Regional/Rural areas.

Kind Regards

SA State Emergency Service

Whyalla Unit