

Reform Submission v2 – Rob Sandford

On reviewing the discussion paper “A Safer Community” and the draft sector model released on Monday 13 October 2014, I provide the following comment in relation to CFS business:

Whilst the discussion paper outlines broad concepts, I believe a full cost benefit analysis is required before any changes are agreed, to ensure what is proposed will actually be an improvement on the current arrangements/organisations. It could be that a move to a new model will actually cost more and require additional staffing beyond the current available resource levels across the agencies, the sector is already under resourced. The other consideration is the management of workloads, all staff within CFS are working beyond capacity, a significant amount of good will is provided by the staff to ensure the services we delivery are delivered, by rationalising/amalgamating roles/functions etc. it is likely to increase workloads not achieve improvement.

CFS has a well-established and respected “Brand” across the state and nationally, any move must ensure this is not harmed or the level of services delivered impacted. Whilst this is an individual submission, I know all the current and past staff have given significantly over many years to establish the modern CFS we see today, it would be a tragedy for this to be eroded for what appears on paper to be an alternate idea. CFS is a modern and professional organisation delivering fire and rescue services to outer-metropolitan and rural communities in South Australia, it would be a great loss for this to be eroded, CFS is not another “Government Department”, we are a Service, provided by Volunteers supported by a small cadre of staff for the Community.

The five functions outlined in the discussion paper don’t appear to cover all the current business areas within CFS, and differ from the possible sector model released on 13/10/14. These business areas within CFS have been developed over many years and evolved to maintain a contemporary focus on the services delivered, the latest evolution was applied in April 2013. The evolution over the many years has been driven by lessons learned, inquiries, royal commissions, business trends and more importantly demands on service delivery from the community. The current model provides alignment of business areas to like business and allows for broad interaction action across the six directorates to achieve the necessary outcomes, this synergy has been developed to ensure we are delivering the best possible outcomes for the community. The listing below represent the Directorates for CFS, marked in yellow don’t appear to be well reflected in the discussion paper or possible sector model and the green areas are where the synergy has been lost in the proposed functions.

Frontline Services (Deputy Chief Officer)

Regional Operations

- SACAD
 - Risk & Response Planning
- Regions
 - Command/Management
 - Operations Planning
 - Prevention
 - Training
 - Business Services
 - Administration Support

State Operations

- State Aviation Operations
 - Aviation Operations
 - Aviation Standards & Planning
 - Aviation Infrastructure Management
- Operational Systems
 - State Coordination Centre
 - Airdesk
 - Operational Systems Training
 - Fire Investigation Coordination
 - Operational Systems (CRIIMSON, AIRS)
 - Operations Data Management
- **Information Operations**
 - Community Engagement
 - Website Management (includes Social Media)
 - Media & Communications (includes Corporate Communications)
 - Campaign Communications
 - Partners in Bushfire Safety
 - Project & Program Development
 - Project & Program Support
- HazMat
 - Maintain and Manage CBRN/HazMat Technical Equipment
 - Audit compliance for CBRN/HazMat Technical and Scientific Infrastructure

Preparedness Operations

- Bushfire Management Planning
- Spatial Analysis
- Development Assessment
 - Commercial
 - Domestic
 - Fire Alarms
- Compliance
- Business Services (Fees & Charges)

Frontline Services Support

Training & Professional Development

- Assessment Systems
- **Command Leadership Incident Management**
- Training Delivery Support (Training Centre Management)
- Rural
- Specialist Skills
 - Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus
 - HazMat
 - Road Crash Rescue
 - Structural
- ESOTAS System Custodian
- Administration Support

Operational Infrastructure & Logistics

- Operational Facilities
- Vehicles & Equipment
- Telecommunications
- Fleet Services
- Firefighter Safety

Operational Capability & Planning

- Risks & Lessons Management
- Incident Management
- Operational Doctrine
- Standards of Fire & Emergency Cover
- Strategy & Governance
 - Spatial Analysis
 - Strategic Compliance

Executive Coordination

- Freedom of Information
- Administration support
- Executive Assistant to the Chief Officer

Business Management

- Finance
- Insurance

By limiting the possible sector model to five functions, this has the potential to overload/whelm the ACO, it is recommended to further spread the model to have a greater balance of responsibilities and reports in each function, the inclusion of a ACO Community Safety & Engagement which would bring together the CFS elements from Preparedness Operations and Information Operations I believe will spread the workload and provide flexibility within the structure. Further to this merge HR/IR and WHS/IM with the Volunteer Services to form a Volunteer/Human Services function.

Regional Operations must have a clear focus on supporting the field personnel, they must have sufficient resources to deliver the necessary support and capability and capacity to ensure the services delivered to the community are best practice. A significant challenge and risk is the management of the cultural differences across the agencies on the ground in delivering services, this will make or break any proposed structure

I further recommend considering including two Deputy Chief Officers who would have responsibility for three functions each, this would ensure the chief officer is able to focus on the strategic issues.

Consideration must be given to the operational requirements of support provided by CFS, the CFS systems of work and on call models should be adopted and any new structure must support these as they, similarly to our corporate structure have evolved from significant learnings including coronial inquiries, royal commissions etc. I believe the CFS models/systems can accommodate the requirements of SES and MFS operational requirements.

For a considerable time, we have been told our people are our greatest assets, as they are the ones actually doing the doing, therefore any change must bring with it equity of employment conditions and remuneration through single EB agreement, which provides common terms and conditions of employment. Our people deserve to be remunerated appropriately for what they do.

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