



Premier of Western Australia

Our Ref: 60-124709

Mr Greg Cook
President
State Emergency Service Volunteer Association
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Dear Mr Cook

PROPOSED EMERGENCY SERVICES ACT 2024 POSITION PAPER

Thank you for your correspondence dated 17 July 2024, and for providing a copy of the detailed "Proposed Emergency Services Act 2024 Position Paper" (Position Paper).

I acknowledge the continued collaborative approach of the State Emergency Service Volunteer Association (SESVA) on necessary reforms in the emergency services sector. SESVA is essential to representing the views of State Emergency Service (SES) volunteers on the development of an Emergency Services Consultation Exposure Draft Bill (the Draft Bill).

I am pleased to learn that the Hon Stephen Dawson MLC, Minister for Emergency Services, recently engaged with the SESVA on these matters at the SESVA Legislation Working Group on 17 July 2024. I understand that this was an excellent opportunity for collaboration.

I have been advised that the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) is considering the seven recommendations of the Position Paper. It is my understanding that many of the recommendations involve policy and operational decisions, which are not necessarily a matter for the new legislation, which is still being drafted.

The Office of the Minister for Emergency Services has provided me with a copy of the response to the SESVA's recommendations. I reaffirm the positions and commitments expressed by the Minister for Emergency Services.

1. Governance model with a Charter and/or Memorandum of Understanding
The Draft Bill will enable the Minister and FES Commissioner to establish a Volunteer Charter.
2. Legal Protection
Confirm that relevant legal protections will be contained within the Draft Bill.
3. Establishment of a Senior Executive Officer with DFES
This is not a matter for the Draft Bill. SESVA is encouraged to continue discussions with the FES Commissioner about how DFES's existing structures can better support the SES.

The Bill has adopted an all-hazards approach in its drafting.

Once Cabinet releases the Exposure Draft Bill for public consultation, the SESVA and SES volunteer members will be notified and provided an opportunity to consider and provide feedback. I strongly encourage the SESVA and SES volunteer members to provide comment through that public consultation process when it occurs.

Lastly, thank you for the wonderful work the SESVA and SES volunteers do for their community and for Western Australia.

Yours sincerely



ROGER COOK MLA
PREMIER

20 AUG 2024