



RFSA

NSW Rural Fire Service Association Incorporated
www.rfsa.org.au
enquiries@rfsa.org.au
ABN 65 291 969 153

PO Box 845, Penrith BC NSW 2751
Phone: (02) 4722 2122
Fax: (02) 4722 2144

The Hon. David Elliott, MP
Minister for Emergency Services
GPO Box 5341
Sydney NSW 2001

22 June, 2016

Dear Minister,

As you know there is considerable unrest within the ranks of the volunteers within the Country Fire Authority (CFA) in Victoria following the actions of the Victorian Government to pursue the adoption of an industrial agreement with the United Firefighters Union (UFU).

It is understood that clauses within the agreement establish UFU influence and control over the CFA to an extraordinary level that could have the potential to destroy the volunteer culture of this emergency service.

This Association, as a member of the Council of Australian Volunteer Fire Associations (CAVFA) has been monitoring the situation carefully in view of the potential impact on NSW given the interstate co-operative fire-fighting arrangements particularly during declared emergencies requiring urgent mobilisation of resources.

I am pleased to say that through the support of the NSW Government and the consultative arrangements put in place with the NSW Rural Fire Service our members currently receive the highest level of respect and recognition throughout the community. The NSW Rural Fire Service is a unique organisation and through these well-established co-operative arrangements, it has a proven record of minimizing the threat of bushfires in this State and saving lives and property.

The Association strongly opposes the political and industrial interference developing in Victoria and has indicated its support for the CFA Volunteers and the CFA Board in their endeavours to protect and manage the valued Australian tradition of volunteerism within the emergency services.

On behalf of our members I seek an assurance from the Premier and you as our Minister that at no time will the NSW Government attempt to register an enterprise agreement that

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overrides State legislation that defines and regulates volunteers/volunteer based emergency services and protects the volunteer rights and operational systems.

I have taken the liberty of referring a copy of this letter to the Premier and I will be writing in similar terms shortly to the Leader of the Opposition as well as the Shadow Minister for Emergency Services seeking similar assurances.

Yours faithfully,

Ken Middleton
President

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