



20 March 2018

Mr Paul Baxter
Commissioner
Fire and Rescue NSW
1 Amarina Avenue
GREENACRE NSW 2190

Dear Mr Baxter,

Rural Fire Service representatives have today offered many misleading explanations as to why Fire and Rescue NSW was not called upon to assist in Tathra on Sunday, such as “putting an urban fire truck on a fire trail was like putting a Porsche on a dirt track” and “it would have been dangerous to have [FRNSW] there”.

RFS Head Office is attempting to deflect attention from the fact that the 100+ properties damaged or destroyed in Tathra were not located on fire trails at all, but on urban streets – streets where FRNSW crews should have been set up and waiting well before the fire front hit.

Unfortunately, quotes attributed this afternoon to an unnamed FRNSW spokesperson are equally misleading, and indicate that FRNSW management has once again succumbed to external pressure to suppress the truth and adopt the party line that everything with our fire services is wonderful and there is nothing to see here. It's not.

The Union asks that you immediately:

- release the FRNSW call logs for this incident;
- confirm what FRNSW resources were available to assist the RFS on the south coast on Sunday;
- confirm if additional FRNSW resources were activated on the south coast on Sunday in anticipation of a possible severe or catastrophic fire event and, if so, what these additional resources were, when they were activated and where they were staged;
- confirm what FRNSW resources were offered to assist the RFS on the south coast, and when these offers were made;
- confirm what FRNSW resources were actually deployed to assist the RFS on the south coast, and when.

Please note that this is a formal request for factual information that should be readily available from a public service agency like FRNSW and, given the obvious public interest, freely provided. If you are unable to provide this information by midday tomorrow then I would ask that you explain why.

Yours sincerely,

Leighton Drury
State Secretary

Fire Brigade Employees' Union of New South Wales

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File Ref. No: FRN18/56
TRIM Ref D2018/018512

Mr Leighton Drury
State Secretary
Fire Brigade Employees' Union of NSW
1-7 Belmore St
Surry Hills NSW 2010

21 March 2018

Dear Mr Drury,

Tathra information request

I refer to your letter dated 20 March 2018 seeking immediate release, by midday today, of call logs and confirmation of a range of operational information related to the 18 March 2018 Tathra bushfire.

I understand that Minister for Emergency Services Troy Grant is today set to announce an Independent Inquiry into firefighting response to the Tathra bushfire. As you will appreciate, it is critical that any information published external to Fire & Rescue NSW (FRNSW) has been fully validated, from all available sources, to ensure 100% accuracy.

Consequently, your proposed timeline for response to your information request is not achievable. However, I attach for your information the requested call logs (BOSS logs) for the Tathra bushfire event. When FRNSW is able to confirm other information you have requested, this will be provided to you.

Please contact Jodie Camden, Manager Industrial Relations 92652852 or jodie.camden@fire.nsw.gov.au to arrange a mutually convenient date to meet and discuss these issues.

Yours sincerely

A/Assistant Commissioner David Felton
Director Operational Capability



Unclassified



File Ref. No: FRN18/56
TRIM Ref D2018/018688

Mr Leighton Drury
State Secretary
Fire Brigade Employees' Union of NSW
1-7 Belmore St
Surry Hills NSW 2010

21 March 2018

Dear Mr Drury,

Tathra information request – update to previous advice

I refer to my letter forwarded to you by email at 12:22pm today.

Apart from the Independent Inquiry into firefighting response to the Tathra bushfire, I am now advised that there will be a separate Coronial Inquiry. As you may appreciate, it is critical that any information published external to Fire & Rescue NSW (FRNSW) has been fully validated, from all available sources, to ensure 100% accuracy.

FRNSW will be carefully reviewing the material you have requested. Notwithstanding my earlier advice indicating my intention to release BOSS data to you, I am not in a position to release that material to you today.

I apologise for any inconvenience caused.

Please contact Jodie Camden, Manager Industrial Relations 92652852 or jodie.camden@fire.nsw.gov.au to arrange a mutually convenient date to meet and discuss these issues.

Yours sincerely

A/Assistant Commissioner David Felton
Director Operational Capability



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