



File Ref. No: FRN11/2
TRIM Ref. No: CC18/105

6 November 2018

Mr Leighton Drury
State Secretary
Fire Brigade Employees' Union of New South Wales
1 – 7 Belmore Street
SURRY HILLS NSW 2010

Dear Mr Drury,

Re: Bega Valley Fire Report Recommendations

Thank you for your letter of 29 October 2018 regarding the draft Terms of Reference for the Review by the Emergency Services Board of Commissioners (our letter to you of 16 October 2018).

I note your comments regarding the breadth of scope for the review, in particular, I note your concern the review should canvass a range of options, not only civilianisation, as part of the review.

I will provide your letter to the Chair of the Emergency Services Board of Commissioners for their consideration and discuss your comments with my colleagues at the next meeting.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "PB", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Paul Baxter
Commissioner





29 October 2018

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

Dear Mr Baxter,

I write in response to the letter received from Acting Commissioner Connellan dated 16 October concerning the Tathra disaster earlier this year and the Government's response to same.

To be frank, the Keelty Inquiry was neither independent nor robust. Mr Keelty is a consultant who was selected and paid by the Government to deliver the recommendations that he did. The Minister's public comments when the Inquiry was announced made it abundantly clear that the inquiry's findings and recommendations were pre-determined, so it is unsurprising that the Union does not agree that they alone should frame or constrain any review of the call taking and dispatch arrangements for the state's fire services.

When I raised these objections with the Minister following receipt of your letter I received his personal assurance that all options remained on the table, including the continued use of the FRNSW Communications Centres and the firefighters who staff them. I was also assured that the Emergency Services Board of Commissioners is free to consider and recommend whatever it sees fit to recommend to the Minister and the Cabinet Committee on Counter Terrorism, Emergency Management and Community Safety.

The draft document that Mr Connellan provided to me on 16 October should be amended so that it better aligns with the Minister's assurances, and makes it clear that the Board of Commissioners is not constrained by the Government's earlier in-principle support for the Keelty Inquiry's recommendations. I look forward to your confirmation that this has occurred.

Yours sincerely,

Leighton Drury
State Secretary



File Ref. No: FRN18/56
TRIM Ref. No: D18/073992

Mr Leighton Drury
State Secretary
Fire Brigade Employees' Union of New South Wales
1 – 7 Belmore Street
SURRY HILLS NSW 2010

COMMERCIAL IN-CONFIDENCE

16 October 2018

Dear Mr Drury,

I write in relation to discussions with Commissioner Baxter regarding the Bega Valley fires and subsequent enquiry.

You are of course aware that the Emergency Services Board of Commissioners has been tasked with implementing the Keelty Inquiry's recommendations. In particular, the review and integration of call taking and dispatch for the NSW fire services has been discussed and a draft TOR has been developed.

The enclosed confidential document has been sent to Fire & Rescue NSW (FRNSW) for comment. I invite you to provide me with FBEU comments on the document.

I request the FBEU to please provide your response to me by COB **Friday 26 October 2018**. This date is essential to allow the responses to be collated and circulated to the Emergency Services Board of Commissioners prior to their next meeting.

The enclosed document contains privileged information that I formally require you to keep confidential.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Malcolm Connellan".

Malcolm Connellan AFSM
A/Commissioner

DRAFT

Project Name	Review and integration of call taking and dispatch for the NSW fire services.
Project Governance	The Office of Emergency Management on behalf of the NSW Emergency Services Board of Commissioners.
Project Purpose	<p>The NSW Government has supported in principle a recommendation of the independent review of the Bega Valley Fires to implement a fully integrated civilianised single call and dispatch centre for the NSW fire agencies, and has tasked the Emergency Services Board of Commissioners to develop a detailed implementation plan to canvass a range of options.</p> <p>The Emergency Services Board of Commissioners has subsequently initiated a review of call and dispatch arrangements across the NSW fire agencies, and has resolved to appoint an independent consultant to assist in the preparation of an options paper.</p> <p>A detailed options paper addressing the recommendations of the independent review of the Bega Valley Fires relating to call and dispatch arrangements is required for consideration by the Board of Commissioners, and will be presented to the Minister for Emergency Services and the Cabinet Committee on Counter Terrorism, Emergency Management and Community Safety.</p>
Project Objectives	<p>To research call and dispatch models to aid in the integration of the fire services presented as an options paper with recommendations.</p> <p>Provide a cost analysis of a combined centre exploring potential redundancy locations in line with recommended models. This should take account of opportunities to leverage other technological solutions being considered by other emergency service agencies now and into the future</p> <p>Suggest potential opportunities to coordinate with other emergency services and non-government rescue agencies during the transition to a combined centre which could be a combination of colocated and virtual collocation.</p>
In Scope	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) An overview of the existing arrangements in place for NSW emergency service agencies.2) Review the call and dispatch arrangements in other Australian jurisdictions, and examples of innovative call and dispatch models in overseas jurisdictions.3) Identify dispatch and incident management requirements suited to the NSW fire services that could enhance the operating models of existing call and dispatch arrangements, including across the broader emergency management sector.4) A human resource workforce plan for the management, staffing, funding, transition and infrastructure requirements of implementing an integrated call and dispatch centre across the NSW fire agencies and a proposed governance model.5) Identify potential redundancy options outside the Sydney CBD; specifically the option of utilising the State Emergency Services Headquarters in Wollongong for redundancy and/or surge.6) Identify opportunities to leverage coordination with other emergency services agencies including the NSW Police Force, NSW Ambulance, and the State Emergency Service.7) Potential opportunities to integrate non-government volunteer rescue organisations into any proposed call and dispatch arrangements.8) Consultation with stakeholders in the development of the options for consideration by the Board.

DRAFT

Out-of-Scope	<p>The review is not intended to provide a prescribed implementation plan</p> <p>While NSW Ambulance should be included in the consultation process, it is not intended to include NSW Ambulance in the future co-location of call and dispatch centres at this time.</p>	
Resourcing	TBC	
Project Timeline	October 2018	Distribution of Consultancy Engagement Brief, Submission Close, Evaluation, Contract Documentation, Preparation and Signing
	December 2018	Initial project progress report presented for feedback and direction from the Board of Commissioners
	April 2019	Final Options report to be submitted.
Key Deliverables/Milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Executive summary• Details of methodology employed• Address all six issues identified in scope• Assessment of options <p>It is expected that an initial draft be submitted to incorporate feedback from the Board of Commissioners, prior to presentation of the final product.</p>	
Background	<p>Following the Bega Valley (Tathra) Fires of 18 March 2018, the NSW Government engaged former Australian Federal Police Commissioner Michael Keelty to undertake an independent review to examine the adequacy of the fire services' response to fires and the call taking and dispatch arrangements. The Bega Valley Independent Review Report made 24 findings and 12 recommendations, 8 of which are related to the call and dispatch.</p> <p>The NSW Government has supported in principle all recommendations of the independent review including recommendation 7 to; implement a fully integrated civilianized single call and dispatch centre, that includes a redundancy option outside the Sydney CBD, which will adopt an agnostic approach to deploy the quickest most suitable resource to an emergency. Such a centre should be managed by either a non-uniformed public servant staffed organisation like the Office for Emergency Management, or the NSW Police Force.</p>	
Organisational Alignment	<p>The development of an integrated call taking and dispatch capability will foster greater coordination during call taking and the efficient deployment of suitable resources which supports the core role of protecting life and property from the threat of fire.</p>	
Contact Officer	<p>Christabel Sheehan</p> <p>Principal Policy Analyst, Emergency Management Policy and Co-ordination</p> <p>Department of Justice, Office of Emergency Management</p> <p>Email: christabel.sheehan@justice.nsw.gov.au</p> <p>Phone: 02 9212 9279</p> <p>GPO Box 5434, Sydney, NSW 2001</p>	