



CFA Volunteer peak body calls for sensible compromise on VEOHRC report

The peak body for CFA Volunteers is frustrated that a legal technicality has again been successfully used to stop the release of a government report into allegations of intimidation and discrimination within the State’s fire services.

Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria (VFBV) CEO Andrew Ford said the State’s 60,000 unpaid CFA personnel are tired of there being too much external interference in the management of CFA and volunteer morale is suffering as a result.

“We are deeply disappointed that an external organisation has been able to stop a government department from doing its job in reviewing another department,” Mr. Ford said.

“The fact that the UFU has gone to such extreme lengths to hide details of recommended improvements simply confirms that there is too much external influence.”

“Today’s outcome is another troubling example of the tail wagging the dog and goes to the very heart of one of the biggest challenges facing our incredible volunteers.”

“VFBV has been the canary in the coalmine on this issue for years.”

“We, like the former Minister, Chair and CEO of the CFA – who were all female - have been attacked for standing up for CFA Volunteers who want little more than the removal of partisan politics and industrial influence from our emergency services.”

“Obviously we don’t know what is in the Report, but the terrible shame is that if it contains even one opportunity for improvement, it seems unlikely the public will ever know.”

“We also share Commissioner Hilton’s ‘extreme disappointment’ that as a result of today’s decision, the valuable insights of the thousands who bravely contributed to the process may never be used for positive change.”

“We therefore urge the UFU to work with VEOHRC and find a way to ensure the review’s most important opportunities for improvement are not lost,” Mr Ford concluded.

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