



NATIONAL BULLETIN

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TO ALL UFUA MEMBERS

UFUA TO APPEAR BEFORE SENATE INQUIRY INTO AUSTRALIA'S PREPAREDNESS FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

The Australian Federal Senate is conducting an inquiry into *"Recent Trends In and Preparedness For Extreme Weather Events"*.

The UFUA has provided an interim submission which includes three draft consultancy reports and will provide the Senate with two subsequent reports demonstrating forecasting of the number of operational firefighters needed across Australia when population movement, values of assets and climate change are taken into account.

UFUA National Secretary Peter Marshall will appear before the Senate Committee in a hearing in Melbourne tomorrow.

The UFUA interim submission included the following three reports

1. Firefighters and Climate Change:

- This report prepared by the National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) updated a 2009 report into the number of operational firefighters in Victoria.
- This updated report analysed firefighter numbers against population movement and growth and current climate change forecasts.
- This report forecasts a 28-40 percent increase is needed in operational firefighters by 2026 (660-950 full time equivalent firefighters) and a further 240 may be needed to address the downturn in volunteerism.
- NIEIR are completing a second interim report this week which maps in Australia the spread of operational firefighters against current populations in local government areas, against asset values in that area and ascertains the increase in fire danger index.

- NEIR are will develop data into a final report which will forecast the number of firefighters needed in Australia to meet the demands of population movement/increase, protection of assets and the effects of climate change in increased extreme weather events.
2. The Merit of a National Registration Board for Firefighting:
- This report prepared by Shea Business Consulting and Business Skills Viability highlighted the lack of interoperability within state, and between state and territory fire services.
 - This report promoted a national registration board of firefighting to nationally coordinate:
 - firefighting standards
 - training standards
 - protection and maintenance of firefighter training and competencies;
 - the professional development of firefighters;
 - the professionalism of firefighting;
 - policy to assist governments on firefighting industry-specific issues
 - interoperability of resources, equipment and firefighting methods
3. The Economic Cost of Fire:
- This report prepared by Economist Ruth Kershaw of EB Economics recommended factors to be incorporated into a National Policy on Fire Services Resourcing; and
 - Factors to be considered in the analysis of the economic costs of fire.

Given the current attacks on firefighter terms and conditions of employment, the attempts to undermine the professionalism of firefighting through attempts to undermine training and competency standards, this is a timely opportunity for the UFUA to inform the Senate on the current realities of the preparedness of fire services throughout Australia.

The UFUA has put together a comprehensive submission of consultancy reports to demonstrate the range of issues that must be considered when assessing the capacity and capability of fire services to meet the challenges of the future including the forecasted increased in extreme weather events.

These consultancy reports are a significant resource not only in mapping current inadequacies in the number of operational firefighters, but also to demonstrate the need to maintain the professionalism of firefighting and the need for change particularly in the lack of interoperability.

Strength in Unity
READ OUT AT MUSTER AND PIN ON NOTICE BOARD
 Authorised by National Secretary Peter Marshall