

Charleville Rural Fire Brigade No1955

Submission to the Queensland Government Finance and Administration Committee, reviewing Workers Compensation and Rehabilitation (Protecting Firefighters) Amendment Bill 2015 (Bill)

Our Charleville Rural Fire Brigade (CRFB) submission is one based in the principle of equity of workers compensation for all firefighters, whether they are full time, auxiliary, or volunteer. We hold this view unanimously.

The proposed Bill enabling full time and auxiliary firefighters to access workers compensation for conditions described in the Bill after one fire attendance as opposed to volunteers being forced to attend 150 fires over a five year period is quite reprehensible.

When called upon our brigade works alongside the 'Red trucks', whether it is a structure fire or a grass fire, we also call upon them occasionally for assistance in areas that they can access; it creates gross inequity and injustice for the State of Queensland to provide protection for Them but not for Us.

The South Australian Government introduced a similar works compensation scheme to the Bill under consideration, and later overturned sections of their Act, recognising the injustice to their valuable volunteers.

The CRFB implores the committee to recommend the adoption of the same criteria for full time and auxiliary fire fighters, as will apply to volunteers. We are valuable to our communities, we provide value to our communities, and we deserve to be respected and valued in return through equivalency in legislation, including workers compensation eligibility.

Nicholas Swadling

Fire Warden and First Officer on behalf of

Charleville Rural Fire Brigade

End of Submission