



Information Paper on the proposed changes to the ACTF&R Structure

Effective and cohesive operations are critical across the ESA's four operational services and are fundamental to the ongoing success of the agency. Reviewing the effectiveness and efficiency of ACT Fire & Rescue's (ACTF&R) service delivery models is an important program within the ESA's Strategic Reform Agenda (SRA) towards achieving cohesive operations.

ACTF&R is acknowledged as one of the most multi skilled fire and rescue capabilities in Australia. The Service is a capable team responding to a broad range of hazards and emergencies to a very high standard. As part of the ESA Expenditure Review process, an independent assessment was undertaken of the ACTF&R's management and command structures. The Expenditure Review noted that there was scope to reform some elements of ACTF&R's service delivery models, including:

1. Like all other fire services in the nation, utilisation is relatively low when responding to fire incidents, and response to incidents has declined annually by 10% since 2008-09;
2. In a predominantly urban environment there is a high proportion of automatic fire alarms (AFAs) per capita than most other cities, which leads to a higher than average number of AFA calls; and
3. ACTF&R is an organisation that requires significant investment, but is not highly utilised due to the relatively low number of fire emergencies. This suggests that there is scope for reform and service improvement.

The ESA's review of enabling services in 2014-15 found that a number of the enabling functions that support the high investment in ACTF&R can also work closely together across the agency. The purpose of this paper is to outline the ESA's intent to review the current ACTF&R service delivery model and implement certain changes that will enhance our response capability and better meet the ACT community's expectations. The proposed changes under consideration include the following:

1. Adjusting managerial arrangements to ensure optimal use of human resources;
2. Where appropriate, to consider making adjustments to the crewing to ensure the most appropriate utilisation of specialist resources
3. Changing the arrangements for responding to some types of fire alarms to minimise unnecessary emergency responses;
4. Controlling organisational expenditure by ensuring that relief and overtime costs are appropriately managed;
5. Opening employment opportunities to temporary employees and higher level lateral recruits; and
6. Improving cost recovery arrangements for all services provided by ESA.

Throughout February 2016, the ESA welcomes your feedback on the proposed changes to the ACTF&R service delivery model as listed above. A further series of consultative meetings will occur to allow staff, volunteers and unions and other interested stakeholders to provide ideas, comments or feedback on the reforms. Alternatively you may provide your feedback to esahaveyoursay@act.gov.au. I thank you all in anticipation of your enthusiastic responses.

Dominic Lane AFSM
Commissioner
ACT Emergency Services Agency

27 January 2016