



ESA Commissioner's Speech

Belconnen Ambulance and Fire & Rescue Station Opening

Friday, 2 September 2016

Thank you MC.

I would like to also acknowledge the traditional owners of the land upon which we gather here today.

Simon Corbell, Deputy Chief Minister, Attorney General, Minister for Environment and Climate Change, Minister for Health, and Minister for Police and Emergency Services; Acting Director General David Pryce; my colleagues, Chief Officers and Directors of the ACT Emergency Services Agency and the Justice and Community Safety Directorate, to all of those people involved in the planning and construction of this outstanding facility, you can all be justifiably proud of the end result. Other distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen. It is a pleasure to acknowledge all of you for your presence here at this historic occasion - the official opening of this new Belconnen Ambulance and Fire & Rescue Station will allow our paramedics and firefighters to continue to improve our delivery of services, which we know are already the best in the nation.

I would like to thank the ACT Government for its ongoing commitment to the improvement of our ESA facilities. This occasion marks not only the completion the most significant project yet under our Station Upgrade and Relocation Program, but it is also fitting that I cover two other important factors.

The first is the record investment in emergency services by the ACT Government over the past four years. And I acknowledge the support given by our Minister, Simon Corbell towards this investment. He has given us over a decade of service that has significantly improved public safety for this city and the surrounding region,

Secondly I believe this is important today light of recent public commentary to counter the claims of an apparent lack of preparation for emergencies.

But firstly I would like to thank the Government, and you Minister, for the construction of this station, West Belconnen, South Tuggeranong, and Greenway Stations over the past four years. Not only have we seen approximately \$60 million in funding to support upgraded stations, but we've also seen funding for additional firefighters, more paramedics including the major commitment of the additional crew at West Belconnen, ongoing upgrades to the ComCen, nearly \$20 million in

funding to ICT which is currently seeing the major upgrades to our radio communications and Computer Aided Dispatch system, and of course the major commitment delivered in the 2015-16 Budget of \$16 million to increase ESA's base funding. All of this support allows our staff and volunteers to effectively and safely deliver our services to the community.

However, the financial support does not stop there. The 2016-17 Budget once again delivers significant financial enhancements under the Government's priorities for a safer community. This increased funding includes a new ACT State Emergency Service station at Calwell, major upgrades to the Fyshwick Fire & Rescue and Guises Creek Rural Fire Service stations, an additional patient transport crew, a new helicopter for the South Care aero medical retrieval service, enhancements to the ESA website and warnings systems, and an increase in the capacity of the ComCen to meet the increase in E-000 calls received by the ACT Ambulance Service .

I would also like to note Minister, under your leadership the Government has significantly strengthened the ACT's legislation and policy to improve the safety of this city and the surrounding region. The Emergencies Act under which we operate is now viewed as part of best practice in emergency management.

It is a piece of legislation that provides for an all hazards approach, it recognises the importance of four separate operational services under the command of our Chief officers, Jon Quiggin, Mark Brown, Tracey Allen and Joe Murphy, brought together through the functions of the Commissioner, to assure effective coordination, and providing for a whole of government approach to emergency planning.

The recent amendments to the Emergencies Act have helped to strengthen these elements by making our accountabilities very clear. It reflects that our highly capable ACT Fire & Rescue is responsible for the complex hazards of a large city in the built up area, and the ACT Rural Fire Service, made up of our dedicated volunteers and ACT Parks and Conservation staff, remains responsible for the highly valued assets of the Territory's National parks, reserves and farms.

The roles and functions of the Commissioner and the Chief Officers have been clarified, not only in times of emergency, but in our training, our planning and our community education roles.

The public's safety is protected by assuring these accountabilities can be enacted in times of significant emergency through the appointment by the Chief Minister of an Emergency Controller. This is a reminder that, during declared emergencies it is ultimately the Chief Minister who is accountable for the ACT in times of crisis.

I am concerned of the the somewhat alarmist commentary in recent times on the ACT's preparedness for the next bushfire disaster. I disagree with most of what has been said in the media recently around the claims of the ACT's poor preparedness for bushfire. I also disagree with the view that we just need more money for responding to bushfire.

Some people obviously choose to remain ignorant of the facts that it takes a range of strategies coming together to achieve our aims. For example, thanks to the outstanding work of the Territory's Parks and Conservation service, supported by our RFS volunteers, the ACT is the only jurisdiction achieving its bushfire hazard reduction targets. Many of the prescribed burns undertaken over the past few years have been very complex. Some have been in sensitive alpine areas, or at the back fences of our suburbs. All of them require the sensitive application of science, skills and experience. Prescribed burns do come with elements of risk and I thank the Government for accepting these small risks in order to achieve a greater public safety outcome.

The Government has made a large investment to significantly upgrade our fire trails. This has allowed immediate access to bushfires. The Mount Franklin fire trail upgrade completed a little over twelve months ago was a great example of a major upgrade that allows not only good access for fire tankers, but also for transporting heavy machinery, bulk water, and people into remote areas quickly and effectively.

The diligent preparation and planning of this trail through remote wilderness areas in our pristine water catchment is an outstanding example of collaboration across government. If people from other regional areas of Australia, or in fact the world, could travel it, they would name it the Mount Franklin highway.

We have been prepared to change and improve, and both the Agency and the community have benefited from the record investments in our capability. This includes additional firefighting appliances, communications, our Community Fire Units, aircraft, the Hume Training Centre and airbase, heavy machinery, and the Emergency Coordination Centre at Fairbairn.

In addition, we also now do things differently. The difficult decision made by firefighters not to place crews in danger on the first night of the Mount Clear fire last December recognises we will always put the safety of our people first. Whilst we have been prepared to accept criticism for this, I think it is important to place on record the outstanding work that came together to place a massive aerial attack, including the C130 Hercules large air tanker which was stationed out of Canberra Airport.

Even more significant, and very different to how remote fires had previously been tackled in the ACT, was the use of bulldozers to get to the fire line, and this action provided for the swift and secure containment of the fire edge in advance of forecast extreme fire weather conditions.

We now also work closer together with our interstate neighbours – we train and exercise together. We frequently provide support to the NSW ambulance, SES, RFS and fire and rescue, and in turn we know that their significant resources will also be on Canberra's doorstep when our own time of need comes.

Our new Strategic Bushfire Management Plan focusses our attention not only on our response to bushfires, but also on preventing bushfires, mitigating their impact, coordinating across government during emergencies, and focussing on recovery. This planning will allow us to bring the community together to combat the threat, manage the consequences of its impact, aid in emotional recovery, and re-build the things that are valued.

But one of the most important parts of the new Strategic Bushfire Management Plan is upon focussing our attention to where the risk is greatest. We are able to refine our focus from a broad brush approach to pinpoint exactly where we are most vulnerable as a community.

We are using science to better map where our risks are greatest, we are partnering and supporting our farmers in the bushfire abatement zone to ensure fuel management and access for firefighters improves, we have reviewed the role of our Community Fire Units, and we continue to recognise our volunteers in the community as a significant asset in the protective model of our collective assets.

Our firefighters and emergency workers, both paid and volunteer, door knock the streets that are most vulnerable to the impact of bushfire. There is nothing more powerful to a member of the

community than receiving a personal message on how to protect themselves and their families than when it comes from one of our own trusted professionals.

In short, we have learned a lot out of the 2003 bushfires and we have also taken notice and learnt from the many other significant natural disasters and emergencies that have occurred across Australia since that time.

We also know we can increase our capability as emergency services by becoming more diverse and inclusive. There is more to our diversification agenda than simply employing a wider gender profile, however, the Women in Emergency Services strategy has been our first step along this pathway. This week, I observed our Fire and Rescue Chief, Mark Brown, deliver a very professional presentation to a national conference in which he described the ACTF&R approach to gender diversification and the outstanding results delivered in getting more women to consider a career as a firefighter.

Mark, I welcome and acknowledge your personal commitment and drive towards our 50:50 recruit college targets, drawing your inspiration from the Australian of the Year, Lieutenant General David Morrison, and his famous question *50:50, why not?* I am very pleased to support your efforts to review our recruitment practices further in order to achieve our stated target. We will need more firefighters and we want more of them to be women.

To make sure that our workforce of the future are accommodated in suitable buildings, we are making sustained investments to the workplaces we ask our emergency services workers to work in, and from, to ensure they are fit for purpose and suitable for a diverse and varied employees and volunteers.

We are, of course, doing many other things such as progressing the professionalism of our ambulance workforce, with the ultimate goal of implementing a system of registration for paramedicine under our Blueprint for Change project. We are enhancing our internal communications, recognising the need to more closely engage with our rostered workforce and our volunteers.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have learnt other hard lessons along the way during our twelve short years as an ESA. We were subjected to the scrutiny that came with Ron McLeod's review, and the coronial inquiry, and we have made the necessary and sometimes difficult changes. We have also been subjected to at least four reviews by the ACT Auditor-General over the last decade. So whilst our strong operational performance and significant improvement since 2004 is there for everyone to see and be proud of, recent audits have demonstrated that we need to improve our governance, our financial management, and our support to our own people.

For this reason, in 2015 the ESA undertook a major Executive restructure to include Governance and Logistics, People and Culture, and Risk and Planning. I wish to place on record today the outstanding contribution Andrew Baker, Peter LeLivre and David Foot are making to support our operational services, while assuring the Government and the community that we will apply the delivery of our services with the efficiency and effectiveness that is expected of us as public servants. I also thank Mark Jones for the significant contribution he is making to supporting the implementation of our ongoing change efforts.

These changes also respect and recognise the significant partnership between ourselves and the corporate functions within the Justice and Community Safety Directorate, and I would like to acknowledge the efforts and support provided in recent years towards improving the delivery of our services provided by Moira Crowhurst, Lana Junakovic, Danielle Krajina, Greg Hammond, Melissa Tierney, and their teams.

I spoke before about how strong our legislative framework is, that provides support for four emergency services and the outstanding levels of service they provide to the community. Our different uniforms, different cultures, different heritages all need to be continued to be celebrated. However, in order to address our current and future challenges we need to remind ourselves that our legislative goal is a collective one.

As emergency services it is our role to protect life, property and the environment.

As part of this legislative responsibility, it is my role to provide for the effective and cohesive management of the emergency services, and as Commissioner this is something I take very seriously.

It is why the ESA has crafted its mission statement around seven simple words: *we work together to care and protect*.

This mission emphasises; we work together; through Cohesive Operations, Collaborative Management, and as a Unified Executive.

The care and protect part of the mission also emphasises what has been lacking in previous strategies that have focused on our Emergency Management role and so much on the critical role of ACTAS's function as part of the health care sector in the ACT.

So it is fitting today to acknowledge at this ambulance and fire station opening, in the midst of increasing demand every year, the dedication and professionalism of our paramedics, communication centre operators and patient transport personnel. The way you go about your work is there for all Canberrans to see. But what we are also able to observe is your singular focus on the patient, and your caring nature as you go about your work.

To our career firefighters, a capable team responding to a complex variety of hazards and emergencies. You continue to excel and achieve every year. You all know change is afoot through the reforms to the emergency 000 communications centre for ACT Fire & Rescue, and in doing so I remind you that I consider you consummate professionals in the way you conduct yourselves as communications centre operators. However, this is an area that is long overdue for change.

As you are aware we commenced the reforms to the ACTAS part of the emergency 000 more than five years ago. There was of course, as there is now within your service, thoughts that the changes would not bring benefit. That has been proved wrong and our ACTAS ComCen is central to the overall success of the whole of ACTAS today.

Our COMCEN reforms will:

- Put more fighters on the front line, available for duty.
- Allow us flexibility for more training and to potentially reduce overtime.
- Will support opportunities to improve response times. We already have the second best fire service response times in Australia, but why not aim for the best?

- Through this COMCEN reform we will get even better at providing faster warnings and alerts to the community.
- Our ability to scale up during emergencies will be vastly improved and we will avoid the current situation which requires more firefighters to attend the ComCen on high fire danger days or during emergencies, as that is the time more than ever that we need you on the front line protecting our citizens.
- We will also provide better support to our RFS and SES volunteers in the field and through our 24/7 operation reduce the need for duplication of duty officer roles within these services.
- Let us not forget our second-greatest emergency hazard to this community comes from severe storm events, our volunteers of the State Emergency Service deserve a COMCEN that meets their needs during severe storm events.

Minister as you move to the next stage of your career you can be assured that the support the Government has given the ESA will continue to be put to the best effect possible. However, as you know given your vast experience and the broad portfolios you have managed over your time in government, the forces of nature and the frailties of human behaviour will continue to conspire to always make our job as emergency services professionals challenging.

Whilst the Canberra community has enjoyed 13 safe summers since our last bushfire tragedy we know the time will come again when we will be put to the test.

Crippling drought, multiple lightning strikes, scorching temperatures, and strong winds will one day come together again. There will be days when it is too dangerous to put firefighters into remote areas, too difficult to fly helicopters, and too overwhelming for our brave firefighters to stop a conflagration from impacting on farms, homes and community assets. However, a lot will be different next time.

Thanks to our much greater understanding of bushfire science, our ongoing changes to our prediction and information systems, and our improvements to our systems for issuing warnings and alerts we are far better placed than ever before to provide the community with the best possible advice to assist in their protection.

However, the nature of human beings means that our warnings will not always be heeded within the community. There will always be some people who regardless of the risk they face will choose to ignore the advice and warnings and continue to place themselves, their families and potentially our own emergency personnel in danger as well. This is why we cannot guarantee everyone's safety, but from an ESA perspective, I can assure you Minister, we will continue to strive towards this very challenging goal.

Ladies and gentleman, thank you for attending here today to help us celebrate the opening of this fantastic facility, and thank you to the community of Aranda for allowing us to build here. You will find us friendly neighbours, and we promise not to turn our sirens on as we go out the door.

Rutland, Kaylee

From: MarandoESA, Frank
Sent: Tuesday, 13 September 2016 6:12 PM
To: Rutland, Kaylee
Subject: Latest versions of everything..... [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]
Attachments: Website and EDM Copy.docx; Draft Commissioner letter to all staff 13-09-16.doc; Speech - Belconnen Station Opening.docx; Strategic Reform Agenda - Website Information.doc; Myth Busting - UFU Claims.doc

Hi Kaylee,

Just giving you the latest versions of all docs in case Dom comes directly to you in the morning.

Thanks

Frank

Frank Marando | Manager, Executive Support Unit

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ACT Emergency Services Agency | Justice and Community Safety | ACT Government

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**ACT Emergency Services Agency**

The ACT Emergency Services Agency (ESA) is the ACT Government organisation charged with providing emergency management services to the Canberra community.

[Read more...](#)

Website and EDM Copy

Get The Facts: Working together; a stronger ESA through strategic reform.

The Emergency Services Agency (ESA) is committed to ensuring the ACT continues to be one of the safest communities in the world to live.

The ESA has learnt hard lessons about managing major emergencies, particularly from the tragedy of the 2003 firestorm.

Recently, the United Firefighters Union (UFU) has made a number of claims about our capability to respond in emergency situations. I am concerned that the inaccuracies being reported to the public undermine our organisation, and the progress made by our service since adopting the learning's of 2003.

Our job, our reason for existing, is to protect the community and make them feel safe. Canberrans should be proud of our emergency services and the role they play in protecting the community and in ensuring our community is one the safest in Australia and the world.

While we have achieved a lot, the ESA is committed to building an even stronger organization and, we must continually evolve if we are to deliver a modernised, integrated and coordinated ESA.

The Strategic Reform Agenda (SRA) process aims to ensure the ACT Fire & Rescue, the ACT Rural Fire Service, the ACT State Emergency Service, and the ACT Ambulance Service all operate cohesively under the Commissioner of the ESA.

Our Strategic Bushfire Management Plan focuses our attention not only on our response to bushfires, but also on preventing bushfires, mitigating their impact, coordinating across government during emergencies, and focussing on recovery. This planning will allow us to bring the community together to combat the threat, manage the consequences of its impact, aid in emotional recovery, and re-build the things that are valued.

Governments have committed to support emergency services by increasing funding to ensure we are best placed to deal with emergency incidents. With record investment being committed to emergency services over the past four years and future planned investments, the ESA is prepared and ready for emerging threats and challenges.

Together, we can continue to make a difference by protecting the ACT and ensuring the safety of our community.

We are well on our way to building an even safer Canberra.

IMPORTANT LINKS

Delivering strong emergency services for Canberra

A plan to protect Canberra

From the Commissioner

Commissioner's Speech – Belconnen Ambulance and Fire & Rescue Station Opening

Strategic Reform Agenda

Myth Busting – UFU Claims

Delivering strong emergency services for Canberra

All Canberrans should be proud of our emergency services and the impact they have had in making Canberra one of the safest cities in the world.

Since 2003, our achievements include:

The Safest City

Canberra is one of the safest places to live in Australia and the world.

Canberra is now one of the best - protected communities in Australia.

Successful prevention leading to decreased demand for fire & rescue responses overall.

Lowest injury and death

Canberra has the lowest fire related injury and death rate and lowest value of property losses

High Satisfaction

Canberra has the best Ambulance patient satisfaction scores

Fastest response times

Canberra has the fastest Ambulance response times nationally

More services. More resources. More Capability. More Results.

Since 2003, all the services associated with wildfire management and suppression have had significant investment and increases in capability, including:

- + A strategic bushfire management plan which includes fuel management which is the most important aspect of bushfire management
- + 1000 more Community Fire Unit volunteers to assist with community protection during major fires
- + 540 more rural firefighters within the ACT Rural Fire Service to tackle remote bushfires
- + 96 remote area firefighters, with aerial firefighting helicopters stationed at Hume heliport every fire season
- + 100 paid professional Parks and Conservation firefighters
- + New vehicles, aerial fire fighting assets and facilities and land management arrangements
- + Investment of 12 replacement ambulances and firefighting appliances in 2017/18 and 2018/19
- + Bushfire wise education programs for the community
- + Community warning technology that can send warnings direct to all mobile phones in an area round a mobile phone tower
- + Compressed Air Foam appliances that can apply huge foam control lines or treat structures with long lasting foam which protects them from ember attack.
- + Platform On Demand (POD) portable command centre, rehabilitation and catering capabilities which can be used to set up remote command and staging areas

A plan to protect Canberra

Our plan is for the protection of Canberra and to continue to realise a safer community. Our Strategic Reform Agenda establishes a framework for continued success and effective utilisation of our services to deliver a modernized, integrated and coordinated Emergency Services Agency.

The plan includes -

World Class Communication Centre

A single Communication Centre (ComCen) that meets the needs of the community and our four operational services.

- + More fire-fighters where the community needs them most.
- + Faster response times to triple zero (000) calls.
- + Faster warnings to the community.
- + Better systems to scale up during large storm events.
- + More professional emergency call takers to ensure we continue to provide the right advice and best service response.

Australia's leading Ambulance service

Increased capability of our ambulance service to meet growing community demand and maintain our response times, which are currently the fastest nationally and the best patient satisfaction scores.

- + More ambulances on the road.
- + Even faster response times.
- + Increased capability and expanded services.
- + Enhanced ambulance workforce.
- + Working towards a plan to implement a system of registration for paramedicine.

A stronger community partnership

We have developed stronger partnerships with the community to help identify and manage risk and improve bushfire management. We are actively ensuring our community is better prepared for bushfire by –

- + Pinpoint exactly where we are most vulnerable as a community
- + Use science to better map where our risks are greatest
- + Partner and support our farmers in the bushfire abatement zone to ensure fuel management and access for firefighters improves
- + Regularly review the role of our Community Fire Units
- + Continue to recognise our volunteers in the community as a significant asset in the protective model our collective assets.
- + Engage our firefighters and emergency workers, both paid and volunteer, to door knock the streets that are most vulnerable, delivering personal messages to educate the community of the impact of bushfires and how to protect themselves and their families.

Even more ways to protect Canberra

The ACT Government is providing an extra \$32.6M to help ESA continue to protect Canberra.

- + \$15.6M over 4 years for front line services
- + \$14.7m over 3 years to upgrade the territory radio network
- + \$1.3m to provide a new ambulance station at Greenway
- + \$971k to replace ESA's direct turnout system (notifies crews for request for assistance).

A modern agency for the modern world

The ESA aims to deliver better located and modernised emergency service facilities by matching service demand to the community's needs and by ensuring our emergency service personnel have the most adequate and appropriate resources to allow them to continue to deliver high levels of service to the community.

- + Executive restructure to include Governance and Logistics, People and Culture, Risk and Planning functions to better support our own people.
- + Record investment in emergency services over past four years and planned investment in the coming years
- + Investment of 12 replacement ambulances and firefighting appliances in 2017/18 and 2018/19
- + Approximately \$60 million investment funding to support upgraded stations
- + More funding for additional firefighters, paramedics and additional crew at West Belconnen
- + Nearly \$20m in funding to ICT including upgrades to the radio communications and computer aided dispatch system
- + \$16 million to increase ESA's base funding
- + New ACT State Emergency station at Calwell
- + Major upgrades to Fyshwick Fire & Rescue and Guises Creek Rural Fire Service station
- + An additional patient transport crew
- + A new helicopter for the South Care aero medical retrieval service
- + Enhancements to the ESA website and warnings systems

Leading workplace diversity

The Emergency Services Agency has taken the lead nationally in committing to a 50/50 gender recruitment recognising the value of a more diverse and inclusive workforce.

- + In 2016 we have been successful in recruiting 25% women in our most recent intake and we will continue to improve.
- + 50:50 Fire & Rescue recruit college targets

ESA Key Focus Areas at a glance

- Even faster response times
- A better prepared and informed community
- More frontline resources
- Risk based bushfire management
- A more diverse workforce

Speech- Belconnen Ambulance and Fire & Rescue Station Opening

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our recruitment practices further in order to achieve our stated target. We will need more firefighters and we want more of them to be women.

To make sure that our workforce of the future are accommodated in suitable buildings, we are making sustained investments to the workplaces we ask our emergency services workers to work in, and from, to ensure they are fit for purpose and suitable for a diverse and varied employees and volunteers.

We are, of course, doing many other things such as progressing the professionalism of our ambulance workforce, with the ultimate goal of implementing a system of registration for paramedicine under our Blueprint for Change project. We are enhancing our internal communications, recognising the need to more closely engage with our rostered workforce and our volunteers.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have learnt other hard lessons along the way during our twelve short years as an ESA. We were subjected to the scrutiny that came with Ron McLeod's review, and the coronial inquiry, and we have made the necessary and sometimes difficult changes. We have also been subjected to at least four reviews by the ACT Auditor-General over the last decade. So whilst our strong operational performance and significant improvement since 2004 is there for everyone to see and be proud of, recent audits have demonstrated that we need to improve our governance, our financial management, and our support to our own people.

For this reason, in 2015 the ESA undertook a major Executive restructure to include Governance and Logistics, People and Culture, and Risk and Planning. I wish to place on record today the outstanding contribution Andrew Baker, Peter LeLivre and David Foot are making to support our operational services, while assuring the Government and the community that we will apply the delivery of our services with the efficiency and effectiveness that is

expected of us as public servants. I also thank Mark Jones for the significant contribution he is making to supporting the implementation of our ongoing change efforts.

These changes also respect and recognise the significant partnership between ourselves and the corporate functions within the Justice and Community Safety Directorate, and I would like to acknowledge the efforts and support provided in recent years towards improving the delivery of our services provided by Moira Crowhurst, Lana Junakovic, Danielle Krajina, Greg Hammond, Melissa Tierney, and their teams.

I spoke before about how strong our legislative framework is, that provides support for four emergency services and the outstanding levels of service they provide to the community. Our different uniforms, different cultures, different heritages all need to be continued to be celebrated. However, in order to address our current and future challenges we need to remind ourselves that our legislative goal is a collective one.

As emergency services it is our role to protect life, property and the environment.

As part of this legislative responsibility, it is my role to provide for the effective and cohesive management of the emergency services, and as Commissioner this is something I take very seriously.

It is why the ESA has crafted its mission statement around seven simple words: *we work together to care and protect*.

This mission emphasises; we work together; through Cohesive Operations, Collaborative Management, and as a Unified Executive.

The care and protect part of the mission also emphasises what has been lacking in previous strategies that have focused on our Emergency

Management role and so much on the critical role of ACTAS's function as part of the health care sector in the ACT.

So it is fitting today to acknowledge at this ambulance and fire station opening, in the midst of increasing demand every year, the dedication and professionalism of our paramedics, communication centre operators and patient transport personnel. The way you go about your work is there for all Canberrans to see. But what we are also able to observe is your singular focus on the patient, and your caring nature as you go about your work.

To our career firefighters, a capable team responding to a complex variety of hazards and emergencies. You continue to excel and achieve every year. You all know change is afoot through the reforms to the emergency 000 communications centre for ACT Fire & Rescue, and in doing so I remind you that I consider you consummate professionals in the way you conduct yourselves as communications centre operators. However, this is an area that is long overdue for change.

As you are aware we commenced the reforms to the ACTAS part of the emergency 000 more than five years ago. There was of course, as there is now within your service, thoughts that the changes would not bring benefit. That has been proved wrong and our ACTAS ComCen is central to the overall success of the whole of ACTAS today.

Our COMCEN reforms will:

- Put more fighters on the front line, available for duty.
- Allow us flexibility for more training and to potentially reduce overtime.
- Will support opportunities to improve response times. We already have the second best fire service response times in Australia, but why not aim for the best?

- Through this COMCEN reform we will get even better at providing faster warnings and alerts to the community.
- Our ability to scale up during emergencies will be vastly improved and we will avoid the current situation which requires more firefighters to attend the ComCen on high fire danger days or during emergencies, as that is the time more than ever that we need you on the front line protecting our citizens.
- We will also provide better support to our RFS and SES volunteers in the field and through our 24/7 operation reduce the need for duplication of duty officer roles within these services.
- Let us not forget our second-greatest emergency hazard to this community comes from severe storm events, our volunteers of the State Emergency Service deserve a COMCEN that meets their needs during severe storm events.

Minister as you move to the next stage of your career you can be assured that the support the Government has given the ESA will continue to be put to the best effect possible. However, as you know given your vast experience and the broad portfolios you have managed over your time in government, the forces of nature and the frailties of human behaviour will continue to conspire to always make our job as emergency services professionals challenging.

Whilst the Canberra community has enjoyed 13 safe summers since our last bushfire tragedy we know the time will come again when we will be put to the test.

Crippling drought, multiple lightning strikes, scorching temperatures, and strong winds will one day come together again. There will be days when it is too dangerous to put firefighters into remote areas, too difficult to fly helicopters, and too overwhelming for our brave firefighters to stop a

conflagration from impacting on farms, homes and community assets. However, a lot will be different next time.

Thanks to our much greater understanding of bushfire science, our ongoing changes to our prediction and information systems, and our improvements to our systems for issuing warnings and alerts we are far better placed than ever before to provide the community with the best possible advice to assist in their protection.

However, the nature of human beings means that our warnings will not always be heeded within the community. There will always be some people who regardless of the risk they face will choose to ignore the advice and warnings and continue to place themselves, their families and potentially our own emergency personnel in danger as well. This is why we cannot guarantee everyone's safety, but from an ESA perspective, I can assure you Minister, we will continue to strive towards this very challenging goal.

Ladies and gentleman, thank you for attending here today to help us celebrate the opening of this fantastic facility, and thank you to the community of Aranda for allowing us to build here. You will find us friendly neighbours, and we promise not to turn our sirens on as we go out the door.

Lastly, just a moment in As a public servant I have always appreciated how you have listened with a balanced view to proposals for policy change, you have supported emergency services when things have not gone as well they should have and you have been a strong advocate for financial support to firefighters, paramedics and volunteers as is evidenced by the facility you are opening here today.

As a small token to recognize your length of service in what must be some form of record as an emergency services minister please accept this photographic collage to acknowledge this significant milestone.

Myth Busting – UFU Claims

UFU Claim 1:

More firefighters - *the ACT is not funding or training enough firefighters. We need more firefighters to replace those retiring, maintain effective fire response times and manage an increasing workload of non-fire incidents.*

ESA's Response:

The ACT Government already employs a comparatively high proportion of firefighters compared to its population base. The ESA has over 350 paid firefighters, over 530 rural fire service volunteers, and 150 trained firefighters in Parks and Conservation Service, Environment and Planning Directorate.

The UFU's whole campaign lacks recognition of the role the ACT Rural Fire Service has in bushfire prevention, mitigation and response. The premise the UFU is attempting to draw is only paid firefighters can effectively protect Canberra is divisive and goes against the objects of the Emergencies Act and ESA's mission of working together.

While the ACT's population is steadily increasing, data also indicates that the demand for fire & rescue services is decreasing. Despite this, the ACT Government has continued to increase funding to deal with emergency incidents. The proactive and preventative measures which are now commonplace, help to maintain very high safety levels for the community we protect and the reason why despite population growth risk has not risen.

The ESA has workforce plans to ensure that the right number of trained emergency response professionals are available in all of our emergency services. One of the proposed reforms, in relation to the ComCen is, in fact, likely to allow trained firefighters to return to their primary role to boost frontline numbers.

The ESA also has 16 new firefighters (4 female, 12 male) currently in training who are due to graduate in late October 2016. This latest intake has been successful in recruiting 25% women. A key focus of the Women in Emergency Services strategy is to ensure that at least 50% of places in future ACTF&R recruitment processes are obtained by women. The ESA has taken the lead nationally in committing to a 50/50 gender recruitment, recognising the value of a more diverse and inclusive workforce.

The ESA is concerned by UFU claims that firefighters are suffering from fatigue. As a result, the ESA will consider the full range of contributory factors that may be affecting the fatigue levels of our staff. These include overtime, personal leave and sickness, returning staff to operational duties, and approvals for secondary employments of staff members.

UFU Claim 2:

Proper Equipment - *we do not have enough specialised vehicles for firefighting in tall buildings or managing HAZMAT incidents or those requiring breathing apparatus.*

ESA response:

The need for additional specialist resources is assessed on an ongoing basis. There are no reported occasions in which the ESA has not had enough specialised vehicles. The current demand is not

increasing but the ESA continues to update, upgrade and improve its specialised vehicles. The ESA considers that it currently has enough specialised vehicles for firefighting in tall buildings, managing HAZMAT incidents, and those requiring breathing apparatus.

The ACT has a Bronto aerial appliance to deal with emergency incidents in tall buildings. Access to more aerial ladder appliances would not guarantee the safety of the community. While the Bronto is a key element of ACTF&R's operational capability, the high building standards in place in the ACT and residents' fire evacuation plans are equally important in ensuring community safety in the event of a fire in a multi-storey building. The ESA has also negotiated with the CSIRO to facilitate access for ESA staff to their Bronto aerial appliance vehicle during emergency situations.

ACTF&R has one dedicated HAZMAT appliance, and one breathing apparatus support vehicle. Both appliances are crewed 24 hours a day by dedicated staff, and there is nothing to suggest that additional appliances of this type are required at this point in time.

In addition there are additional specialist HAZMAT resources available in Platforms On Demand (PODs) and there is a breathing apparatus POD which can be used if required. It has not been deployed at an operational incident yet.

UFU Claim 3:

No part time stations - we cannot protect the new and growing suburbs around Chisholm and Molonglo with part time stations. Response times will suffer and lives will be put at risk. All Canberrans deserve the same level of protection.

ESA response:

There is no plan to introduce part time stations.

UFU Claim 4:

A strong organisation - the Government must not remove firefighters from the emergency command centre or remove firefighter training, Community Resilience and Human Resources from the direction and control of firefighters. Changes like these will leave Fire and Rescue a much weaker organisation, less capable of protecting Canberra.

ESA response:

Firefighting knowledge will be required within the ComCen and to undertake the Incident Management Functions including command and control of firefighting resources, as is current practice during major emergencies.

The community is best served by having more firefighters on the road. The ESA's current model has the same amount of staff regardless of the number of calls per hour. Data shows that at 7:00pm we receive three times more calls to fires than at 3:00am, but currently we maintain the same staffing model at both times. This is an area of improvement. We need more operators at the right time. We need to scale up better for major incidents. Currently, we need to take more firefighters away from their fire appliances to staff the ComCen. The new model puts them where the community needs them most. Consistent with the "all hazards, all services" approach our new

ComCen will be staffed by professional emergency call takers to ensure the right advice is provided, the correct service is dispatched and to help us provide faster warnings to the community. We'll have a better system when we have large scale storm events to track and record those people that need assistance so that our crews can attend quicker.

Each of our services will contribute to combined communications, training, human resources, and community resilience, to make our emergency services stronger and more able to protect Canberra and the ACT.

ESA also intends to remove administrative and rostering duties from the ComCen so the firefighters in there can focus exclusively on applying their technical knowledge to incidents rather than filling vacant shifts.

UFU Claim 5:

A strong plan - ACT major bushfire plans are in disarray. The intended bushfire abatement zone, created after 2003 has been rolled back leaving the outer suburbs of Canberra exposed and vulnerable.

ESA response:

The campaign claims that ACT major bushfire plans are in disarray. This could not be further from the truth.

Bushfire management is the subject of the Strategic Bushfire Management Plan. Version 3 of the Strategic Bushfire Management Plan was tabled in the Legislative Assembly in September 2014. The five year plan clearly details the Government's priorities for bushfire prevention and suppression across 12 key objectives.

All of the services associated with wildfire management and suppression have had significant investment and increases in capability since 2003. This includes more than 600 rural firefighters, close to 1,000 CFU volunteers, and Remote Area Firefighting Teams (RAFT). In addition, there are new vehicles, aerial firefighting assets and facilities and land management arrangements.

The existing response arrangements outline that the first response to all grass and bush fires in the ACT will be by the nearest available most appropriate resource, irrespective of jurisdiction or Service. Both ACT fire services continue to work together collaboratively and cohesively in responding to fires across both the built up and rural areas of the ACT.

UFU Claim 6:

Ready for emerging threats - we are not ready for the increasing threats and challenges of terrorism, climate change, population growth and a rapid increase in non-fire rescue incidents such as rescues and car accidents.

Canberra is prepared for the threats by having four well trained, equipped and funded emergency services. ACT Fire & Rescue, the ACT Rural Fire Service, the ACT State Emergency Service, and the ACT Ambulance Service all operate cohesively under the Commissioner of the ESA.

All Directorates of the ACT Government assist in the preparation for emergencies by providing supporting functions that will assist in dealing with any current or emerging threat. Canberra is now one of the best protected communities in Australia. We have the lowest fire related injury and death rate as well as the lowest value of property losses. We have the best patient satisfaction scores and our patient transport personnel, paramedics, firefighters and volunteers are second to none. We are proud of those achievements but we are not complacent.

When talking about the hard lessons learnt about managing emergencies, particularly from the tragedy of the 2003 firestorm, it is important to resist re-establishing an unhealthy culture that would see our services uncoordinated, culturally isolated and with every potential to be as overwhelmed as they were in 2003.

The ESA plans to continue to improve and bring its services closer together. Each of the services will contribute to combined communications, training, HR and community resilience to make our emergency services stronger and more able to protect Canberra and the ACT.

The new ComCen will provide faster warnings to the community. It will give us a better system when we have large scale storm events to track and record those people that need assistance so that our crews can attend quicker. It will be staffed by professional emergency call takers to ensure the right advice is provided and correct service dispatched.

The ACT Government is supporting us to continue to improve by providing an extra \$32.6m:

- \$15.6m over 4 years in extra funding for frontline services.
- \$14.7m over 3 years to upgrade the territory radio network used by ESA and other services to communicate, particularly during emergencies.
- \$1.3m between 2015-16 to provide a new ambulance station at Greenway.
- \$971k to replace ESA's direct turnout system (notifies crews for request for assistance).

Should the worst happen the ACT is well positioned to bring the community together to combat the threat, manage the consequences of its impact, aid in emotional recovery and re-build the things that are valued.

Disputing the figures:

UFU Claim:

17 % increase in population, but only two extra firefighters have been added per shift.

ESA Response:

Canberra's population has increased by 55,000 people however overall demand for ACT Fire & Rescue services has dropped. We attribute this decline to active prevention and preparedness activities being delivered to the community. Any increase in non-fire emergency is currently balanced by falling demand in other areas such as automatic fire alarms and structure fires. Should the evidence show the need for altering resource allocation for a particular threat, risk or hazard the ESA will do that. ESA will continue to recruit and train firefighters and other emergency

services personnel in line with the community's needs e.g. we have 16 new firefighters currently in training and we are increasing the numbers employed in the ambulance services because of increasing service demand.

UFU Claim:

22% increase in non-fire related emergencies, leaves less staff to fight fires since 2002-2003 leading to 50,000 overtime hours

ESA Response:

Any increase in non-fire emergency is currently balanced by falling demand in other areas such as automatic fire alarms and structure fires. The ESA is concerned by UFU claims that firefighters are suffering from fatigue. As a result, the ESA will consider the full range of contributory factors that may be affecting the fatigue levels of our staff. These include mismanaged overtime, personal leave and sickness, returning staff to operational duties, and secondary employments of staff members. We are investigating officer overtime which is largely unexplained because all positions at those ranks are filled.

The disparity between the Commissioner's Notifiable Instrument for bushfire stand up days and current ACT Fire & Rescue practice is contributing to the overtime rates for firefighters. The ESA Commissioner will work closely with the ACT Fire & Rescue Chief to address this matter.

UFU Claim:

Non-fire related emergencies have increased by 31 per cent since 2002-03. This increasing workload has meant firefighters have undertaken a staggering 50,000 overtime hours over the last year to May, a 100% increase on the year prior.

ESA Response:

The UFU have claimed on that non-fire related response has risen 22% and then at a later date they claim it has risen 31%. The disparity between these figures is confusing. However, the data reported to Government by ACT Fire & Rescue indicates that the claim by the UFU that Non-fire related emergencies have increased by 31 per cent since 2002-03 is accurate when comparing two years of rescue data. There is a 31% increase when the two years are compared for non fire rescues. In 2002/03 there were 1096 rescue incidents including road rescues. In 2014/15 there were 1440 incidents. Thus a 31 % increase between those years. However, according to the data provided by ACT Fire & Rescue to Government, the total incidents attended dropped from **9773** in 2002/03 to **9459** in 2014/15. As such, overall demand dropped, indicating we were less busy fighting fires and all other incidents combined giving ACT Fire & Rescue more time for responding to increasing rescues. Rescues increased by 344 incidents for the year selected. Overall demand has decreased by 314 incidents. That is the net drop in incidents overall.



Dear colleagues,

During the opening of the Belconnen Ambulance and Fire & Rescue Station earlier this month, I took the opportunity to reflect on how far our Emergency Service Agency (ESA) has progressed since 2003. I believe in light of recent public commentary there is a need to address misleading messages that the ESA has not learnt from history. A copy of my speech at the station opening is available [here](#) (hyperlink) on the ESA website.

Successive ACT Governments have clearly demonstrated their willingness to invest significantly in emergency services. I believe that as with all emergency response strategies, decisions on investments should be based on data and facts, and allow our firefighters and paramedics to continue providing high levels of public safety. Therefore, it concerns me that the upcoming ACT Election is being used as a platform to politicise public safety, by campaigning for investment in areas where it is not required.

I disagree with the view that we simply need more money for responding to bushfire, and I disagree with the views expressed about the capability of ACT Fire & Rescue alone being able to ensure the safety of our community. The ACT Rural Fire Service, made up of our dedicated volunteers and ACT Parks and Conservation staff, is a significant asset in its responsibility for bushfire prevention, mitigation and response. The strength of our firefighters and emergency workers, both paid and volunteer, working effectively together to protect Canberra, is part of the ESA's mission for a safer community.

By building a stronger ESA through strategic reform, we plan to continue to improve and to bring our services closer together. The ESA website now contains information on the deliverables of the Strategic Reform Agenda (SRA), and includes supporting data for decisions around the SRA. Much of the supporting data is obtained from independent sources such as the *Report on Government Services*. I encourage you to view this information [here](#) (hyperlink) on the ESA website.

ACT Emergency Services Agency
The trusted agency for emergency
management in the ACT

Web www.esa.act.gov.au
Email esahaveyoursay@act.gov.au

GPO Box 158, Canberra,
ACT 2601
Phone (02) 6205 0400

Over the coming weeks the SRA Director, Mr Mark Jones, will be delivering a series of staff forums to discuss the outcomes of the ComCen consultation program. I would also encourage all staff and volunteers to attend these sessions.

As always, please use the ESAHaveYourSay mail system to direct your comments and concerns or make an appointment with the SRA team by contacting Joanne Holmes via email joanne.holmes@act.gov.au or phone 6205 5210.

Regards

Dominic Lane AFSM
Commissioner

Strategic Reform Agenda

(Introduction)

Canberra is the safest place to live in Australia and one of the safest places to live in the world. Canberra is now one of the best protected communities in Australia. We have the lowest fire related injury and death rate as well as the lowest value of property losses. We have the best Ambulance patient satisfaction scores and our patient transport personnel, paramedics, firefighters and volunteers are second to none. We are proud of those achievements but we are not complacent.

The ACT Government has learnt hard lessons about managing major emergencies, particularly from the tragedy of the 2003 firestorm. One of the most important lessons is to ensure a modernised, integrated and coordinated Emergency Services Agency. The ESA's Strategic Reform Agenda will resist the re-establishment of an unhealthy culture that would see our services uncoordinated, culturally isolated and with every potential to be as overwhelmed as they were in 2003. The ESA plans to continue to improve and bring its services closer together through our Strategic Reform Agenda, which specifically aims to:

(SRA Deliverables)

1. Deliver Faster Emergency Triple Zero (000) Response

Statement of intent: The ESA plan to deliver a single Communication Centre (ComCen) that meets the needs of the community and our four operational services. Consistent with the all hazards all services approach our new communications centre will be staffed by professional emergency call takers to ensure the right advice is provided, the correct service is dispatched and to help us provide faster warnings to the community. We'll have a better system when we have large scale storm events to track and record those people that need assistance so that our crews can attend quicker.

Facts: Currently we have to take more firefighters away from their stations to staff the ComCen. The new model puts them where the community needs them most. The community is best served by having more firefighters on the road, not call taking in our ComCen. This model is consistent with national and international models. Our current model has the same amount of staff regardless of the number of calls per hour. At 7pm we got 3x more calls to fires than we do at 3am but we still have the same staffing model. We need to improve. We need more operators at the right time. We need to scale up better for major incidents.

Rationale: Our **new Communications Centre** puts more fire-fighters where the community needs them most and will provide faster warnings to the community. It will give us a better system when we have large scale storm events to track and record those people that need assistance so that our crews can attend quicker. It will be staffed by professional emergency call takers to ensure we continue to provide the right advice and best service response. *The reformed Comcen will still have technical experts from fire and ambulance to ensure the*

most appropriate resources respond to incidents. These experts will not have rostering and administrative roles, which is currently the case, to allow them to solely focus on Triple Zero response.

2. A Larger Professionalised Ambulance Service

Statement of intent: The ESA plan on growing the capability of our Ambulance service by increasing the number of ambulances on the road, ensuring adequate staffing levels and expanding the range of services offered to the community.

Facts: Community demand for Ambulance services is increasing steadily. We have the fastest response time's nationally and the best patient satisfaction scores. Our patient transport personnel and paramedics are second to none.

Rationale: The ESA will enhance the professionalism of our ambulance workforce, with the ultimate goal of implementing a system of registration for paramedicine. We will increase our staffing numbers and resources to ensure the Canberra community continue to receive the best ambulance services in the nation.

3. A Community Prepared for Bushfire

Statement of intent: The ESA will utilise a range of strategies across Government to ensure our community is prepared for bushfire. Not one emergency service alone can protect the ACT so we will continue to ensure our community is one of the best protected communities in Australia by working with our Territory's Parks and Conservation service and our volunteers to ensure we diligently plan and prepare to manage bushfire risk, as well as respond to the threat of bushfire.

Facts: We have the lowest fire related injury and death rate as well as the lowest value of property losses. We are proud of those achievements but we are not complacent. Bushfire management is the subject of a Strategic Bushfire Management Plan. All of the services associated with wildfire management and suppression have had significant investment and increases in capability since 2003. This includes 1000 Community Fire Unit volunteers, 570 Rural Fire Service volunteers, Remote Area Firefighting Teams (RAFT) and 100 paid professional Parks and forestry firefighters. In addition there are new vehicles, aerial firefighting assets and facilities and land management arrangements. Our new Strategic Bushfire Management Plan focusses our attention not only on our response to bushfires, but also on preventing bushfires, mitigating their impact, coordinating across government during emergencies, and focussing on recovery. This planning will allow us to bring the community together to combat the threat, manage the consequences of its impact, aid in emotional recovery, and re-build the things that are valued.

But one of the most important parts of the new Strategic Bushfire Management Plan is upon focussing our attention to where the risk is greatest. We are able to refine our focus from a broad brush approach to pinpoint exactly where we are most vulnerable as a community. We are using science to better map where our risks are greatest, we are partnering and supporting our farmers in the bushfire abatement zone to ensure fuel management and access for firefighters improves, we have reviewed the role of our Community Fire Units, and we continue to recognise our volunteers in the community as a significant asset in the protective model our collective assets. Our firefighters and emergency workers, both paid and volunteer, door knock the streets that are most vulnerable to the impact of bushfire. There is nothing more powerful to a member of the community than receiving a personal message on how to protect themselves and their families than when it comes from one of our own trusted professionals.

Rationale: Recognising that no one service can realistically expect to deal with a major disaster in isolation the ACT Government adopted recommendations from the 2003 bushfire review bringing the operational services together under ESA. We have taken an all hazards approach to emergency management aiming for all services to collaborate and support one another to protect all Canberrans.

4. A More Accountable ESA to the ACT Community

Statement of intent: The ESA aim to ensure our governance, financial management, and our support to our own people Culture operates to its fullest capacity. Through the restructure of our support functions, we will ensure our organisation operates under best business management practices to ensure our business performance is as strong as our operation performance.

Facts: So whilst our strong operational performance and significant improvement since 2004 is there for everyone to see and be proud of, recent audits have demonstrated that we need to improve our governance, our financial management, and our support to our own people.

Rationale: The ESA has undertaken a major Executive restructure to include Governance and Logistics, People and Culture, and Risk and Planning functions. These changes will ensure the ESA as an organisation can be operated to its fullest efficiency. These changes also respect and recognise the significant partnership between ourselves and the corporate

functions of our organisation. Our different uniforms, different cultures, different heritages all need to be continued to be celebrated. However, in order to address our current and future challenges we need to remind ourselves that our legislative goal is a collective one. As emergency services it is our role to protect life, property and the environment.

5. Better Located and Modernised Emergency Service Facilities

Statement of intent: The ESA will aim to deliver better located and modernised emergency service facilities by matching service demand to the community's needs and by ensuring our emergency service personnel have the most adequate and appropriate resources to allow them to continue to deliver high levels of service to the community.

Facts: The ACT Government has made a record investment in emergency services over the past four years. Planned vehicle purchases include 5 ambulances in 2017/18 and a further 8 in 18/19 as well as a range of special appliances for fire and rescue service, Rural Fire Service, State Emergency Services. Not only have we seen approximately \$60 million in funding to support upgraded stations, but we've also seen funding for additional firefighters, more paramedics including the major commitment of the additional crew at West Belconnen, ongoing upgrades to the ComCen, nearly \$20 million in funding to ICT which is currently seeing the major upgrades to our radio communications and Computer Aided Dispatch system, and of course the major commitment delivered in the 2015-16 Budget of \$16 million to increase ESA's base funding. All of this support allows our staff and volunteers to effectively and safely deliver our services to the community.

The 2016-17 Budget delivers significant financial enhancements under the Government's priorities for a safer community. This increased funding includes a new ACT State Emergency Service station at Calwell, major upgrades to the Fyshwick Fire & Rescue and Guises Creek Rural Fire Service stations, an additional patient transport crew, a new helicopter for the South Care aero medical retrieval service, enhancements to the ESA website and warnings systems, and an increase in the capacity of the ComCen to meet the increase in E-000 calls received by the ACT Ambulance Service

Rationale: Should the worst happen the ACT is well positioned to bring the community together to combat the threat, manage the consequences of its impact, aid in emotional

recovery and re-build the things that are valued. We will do this by **working together to care and protect**.

6. A more Diverse Workforce to reflect our Community

Statement of Intent: The ESA will increase our capability as emergency services by becoming more diverse and inclusive.

Facts: We have implemented 50:50 Fire & Rescue recruit college targets and are committed to recruiting more women at all levels and functions across the agency. To make sure that our workforce of the future are accommodated in suitable buildings, we are making sustained investments to the workplaces we ask our emergency services workers to work in, and from, to ensure they are fit for purpose and suitable for a diverse and varied employees and volunteers.

Improvements made to the ESA since 2003:

- 50 community fire units with 1000 volunteers to assist with community protection during major fires,
- Remote Area Fire Teams (RAFT) within the RFS and TAMS to tackle remote bushfires when they are start in inaccessible terrain,
- Contracted Aerial firefighting helicopters stationed at the Hume heliport every fire season,
- Increased staff and volunteer numbers in TAMS and RFS,
- A strategic bushfire management plan which includes fuel management which is the most important aspect of bushfire management,
- Bushfire wise education programs for the community so that households are better prepared,
- Community warning technology that can send warnings direct to all mobile phones in an area around a mobile phone tower,
- An emphasis on fighting wildfires when they are small, straight after they are detected to ensure they do not get too big to extinguish or control.
- Compressed Air Foam appliances that can apply huge foam control lines or treat structures with long lasting foam which protects them from ember attack,

- New bushfire tankers for the RFS and ACTFR including bulk water carrying capability,
- Platform On Demand (POD) portable command centre, rehabilitation and catering capabilities which can be used to set up remote command and staging areas,
- The Bushfire Abatement Zone (BAZ) has been adapted to be a shared planning area to eliminate inconsistency and confusion over control of fires within the BAZ. The inter-service confusion over incident control within the BAZ was making it unworkable as a command and control tool. By separating urban and rural control responsibilities it clarified which agency was responsible and in control of incidents whilst still relying on the nearest appropriate resource to respond to incidents irrespective of service.

Rutland, Kaylee

From: Lane, Dominic
Sent: Monday, 19 September 2016 3:00 PM
To: Rutland, Kaylee
Subject: RE: Working together; a stronger ESA through strategic reform [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Kaylee,

Can you and Mark discuss who the contact is for CO's to send notifications whilst you are on leave.
 Thanks

Regards

Dominic Lane AFSM

Commissioner

ACT Emergency Services Agency

Phone: 02 6207 8383 | Fax: 02 6207 8447

Justice and Community Safety Directorate

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dominic.lane@act.gov.au www.esa.act.gov.au



From: Rutland, Kaylee
Sent: Monday, 19 September 2016 2:56 PM
To: Brown, Mark; Murphy, Joe; Allen, Tracey
Cc: Lane, Dominic; MarandoESA, Frank
Subject: FW: Working together; a stronger ESA through strategic reform [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Dear Chief Officers,

Could you please ensure that the email below from the ESA Commissioner is forward on to your volunteer members and placed in any service specific newsletters or communiqués. The factsheets located on the webpage here: <http://esa.act.gov.au/about-us/esa-through-strategic-reform/> can also be downloaded and sent as separate documents or attached to your internal communication materials. They can also be used as a reference for talking points if you are attending volunteers meetings in the coming weeks.

I would appreciate if you could please cc me in to your email forwards and/or notify me if you publish any of the website material.

We would appreciate if the dissemination of this information to volunteers could be carried out before the end of the week to ensure the timely receipt of the information.

Please contact me should you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you.

Kind regards,

Kaylee Rutland

Internal Communications Manager
Strategic Reform Agenda Program

Phone: (02) 6205 6746



ACT Emergency Services Agency

The ACT Emergency Services Agency (ESA) is the ACT Government organisation charged with providing emergency management services to the Canberra community.

[Read more...](#)

From: Everett, Kaylene **On Behalf Of** Lane, Dominic
Sent: Monday, 19 September 2016 2:41 PM
To: ##All Staff ACT Emergency Services Agency
Subject: Working together; a stronger ESA through strategic reform [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Dear colleagues,

During the opening of the Belconnen Ambulance and Fire & Rescue Station earlier this month, I took the opportunity to reflect on how far our ACT Emergency Services Agency (ESA) has progressed since 2003. I took this opportunity in light of recent public commentary, as I believe there is a need to address misleading messages that the ESA has not learnt from history. A copy of my speech at the station opening is available [here](#) on the ESA website.

Successive ACT Governments have clearly demonstrated their willingness to invest significantly in emergency services. I believe that as with all our strategies, decisions on investments should be based on data and facts. Making the right decisions will allow our firefighters, paramedics and volunteers to safely and effectively provide high levels of service.

We are a stronger organisation because we have four operational services, effectively delivering high quality emergency services to the community. Our strength is underpinned by our mission of working together, and through this mission we are well on the way to building an even safer community.

Claims by the United Firefighters Union (UFU) that the ACT is not funding enough firefighters, that there are not enough specialised vehicles, and that part time stations are being introduced, are simply untrue. And to counter some of the UFU's other claims; the ESA is a strong organisation, with a strong plan, and preparing for emerging threats.

Of most concern to me is the UFU's call to help "fire proof Canberra". As Emergency Services personnel, we know that this sets an unrealistic expectation to the ACT community. However, we will continue to progress a broad range of strategies, delivered together through our operational services, to ensure we provide the community with the best possible care and protection.

I encourage you to view the facts [here](#) on the ESA website. As always, please use the [ESAHaveYourSay mail system](#) to direct your comments and concerns.

Regards

Dominic Lane AFSM | Commissioner
Phone +61 6207 8383 | Email: dominic.lane@act.gov.au
ACT Emergency Services Agency | Justice & Community Safety Directorate
9 Amberley Avenue, Fairbairn Business Park Majura ACT 2609 | GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601
www.esa.act.gov.au



Rutland, Kaylee

From: Brown, Mark
Sent: Monday, 19 September 2016 2:58 PM
To: McGregor, Rob
Cc: Maloney, Richard; Schlizio, Jim; Rutland, Kaylee
Subject: FW: Working together; a stronger ESA through strategic reform [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Importance: High

Hi Rob

Can you please ensure that all CFU volunteers are made aware of the Fact Sheets published today on the ESA web site in relation to the Strategic Reform Agenda.

Many thanks
 Mark

From: Rutland, Kaylee
Sent: Monday, 19 September 2016 2:56 PM
To: Brown, Mark; Murphy, Joe; Allen, Tracey
Cc: Lane, Dominic; MarandoESA, Frank
Subject: FW: Working together; a stronger ESA through strategic reform [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

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 Strategic Reform Agenda Program

Phone: (02) 6205 6746



ACT
 Government



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Dominic Lane AFSM
Commissioner

19 September 2016

ACT Emergency Services Agency
*Cohesive Operations, Collaborative
Management Team, Unified Executive*

Web www.esa.act.gov.au
Email esahaveyoursay@act.gov.au

GPO Box 158,
Canberra, ACT 2601
Phone (02) 6205 0400

DELIVERING STRONG EMERGENCY SERVICES FOR CANBERRA

ALL CANBERRANS SHOULD BE PROUD OF OUR EMERGENCY SERVICES AND THE IMPACT THEY HAVE HAD IN MAKING CANBERRA ONE OF THE SAFEST CITIES IN THE WORLD.

Since 2003, our achievements include:

THE SAFEST CITY

- » Canberra is one of the safest places to live in Australia and the world
- » Canberra is now one of the best - protected communities in Australia
- » Successful prevention leading to decreased demand for fire & rescue responses overall



LOWEST INJURY AND DEATH

Canberra has the lowest fire related injury and death rate and lowest value of property losses per capita



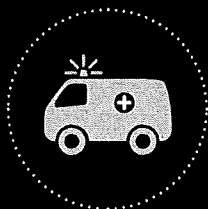
HIGH SATISFACTION

Canberra has the best Ambulance patient satisfaction scores in Australia



FASTEST RESPONSE TIMES

Canberra has the fastest Ambulance response times nationally



MORE SERVICES. MORE RESOURCES. MORE CAPABILITY. MORE RESULTS.



Since 2003, all the services associated with bushfire management and suppression have had significant investment and increases in capability, including:

- » **A strategic bushfire management plan** which includes fuel management which is the most important aspect of bushfire management
- » **1000 more Community Fire Unit volunteers** to assist with community protection during major fires
- » **530 rural firefighters** within the ACT Rural Fire Service to tackle bushfires
- » **96 remote area firefighters**, with aerial firefighting helicopters stationed at Hume Airbase every fire season
- » **150 paid Parks and Conservation firefighters**
- » **New vehicles, aerial fire fighting assets and facilities and land management arrangements**
- » **Planned investment of 12 replacement ambulances and firefighting appliances in 2017/18 and 2018/19**
- » **Bushfire Ready education programs** for the community
- » **Improved emergency alert technology** that can send warnings direct to phones during an emergency
- » **Compressed Air Foam appliances** that can apply huge foam control lines or treat structures with long lasting foam which protects them from ember attack
- » **Platform On Demand (POD)** portable command centre, rehabilitation and catering capabilities which can be used to set up remote command and staging areas



ACT
Government



THE FACTS: BUILDING A STRONGER ESA THROUGH STRATEGIC REFORM.

UFU CLAIM 1:

"More firefighters - the ACT is not funding or training enough firefighters. We need more firefighters to replace those retiring, maintain effective fire response times and manage an increasing workload of non-fire incidents."

ESA RESPONSE:

The ACT Government already employs a comparatively high proportion of firefighters compared to its population base. The ESA has over 338 paid firefighters, over 530 rural fire service volunteers, and 150 trained firefighters in Parks and Conservation Service, Environment and Planning Directorate.

The UFU's whole campaign lacks recognition of the role the ACT Rural Fire Service has in bushfire prevention, mitigation and response. The premise the UFU is attempting to draw is only paid firefighters can effectively protect Canberra is divisive and goes against the objects of the Emergencies Act and ESA's mission of working together.

While the ACT's population is steadily increasing, data also indicates that the demand for fire & rescue services is not. Despite this, the ACT Government has continued to increase funding to deal with emergency incidents. The proactive and preventative measures which are now commonplace, help to maintain very high safety levels for the community we protect and the reason why despite population growth risk has not risen.

The ESA has workforce plans to ensure that the right number of trained emergency response professionals are available in all of our emergency services. One of the proposed reforms, in relation to the ComCen is, in fact, likely to allow trained firefighters to return to their primary role to boost frontline numbers.

The ESA also has 16 new firefighters (4 female, 12 male) currently in training who are due to graduate in late October 2016. This latest intake has been successful in recruiting 25% women. A key focus of the Women in Emergency Services strategy is to ensure that at least 50% of places in future ACTF&R recruitment processes are obtained by women. The ESA has taken the lead nationally in committing to a minimum 50/50 recruitment of women, recognising the value of a more diverse and inclusive workforce.

The ESA is concerned by UFU claims that firefighters are suffering from fatigue. As a result, the ESA will consider the full range of contributory factors that may be affecting the fatigue levels of our staff. These include overtime, personal leave and sickness, returning staff to operational duties, and approvals for secondary employments of staff members.

UFU CLAIM 2:

"Proper Equipment - we do not have enough specialised vehicles for firefighting in tall buildings or managing HAZMAT incidents or those requiring breathing apparatus."

ESA RESPONSE:

The need for additional specialist resources is assessed on an ongoing basis. There are no reported occasions in which the ESA has not had enough specialised vehicles. The current demand is not increasing but the ESA continues to update, upgrade and improve its specialised vehicles. The ESA considers that it currently has enough specialised vehicles for firefighting in tall buildings, managing HAZMAT incidents, and those requiring breathing apparatus support.

The ACT has a Bronto aerial appliance to deal with emergency incidents in tall buildings. Access to more aerial ladder appliances would not guarantee the safety of the community. While the Bronto is a key element of ACTF&R's operational capability, the high building standards in place in the ACT and residents' fire evacuation plans are equally important in ensuring community safety in the event of a fire in a multi-storey building. The ESA has also negotiated with the CSIRO to facilitate access for ESA staff to their Bronto aerial appliance vehicle during emergency situations.

ACTF&R has one dedicated HAZMAT appliance, and one breathing apparatus support vehicle. Both appliances are crewed 24 hours a day by dedicated staff, and there is nothing to suggest that additional appliances of this type are required at this point in time.

In addition there are additional specialist HAZMAT resources available in Platforms On Demand (PODs) and there is a breathing apparatus POD which can be used if required. It has not been deployed at an operational incident yet.

UFU CLAIM 3:

"No part time stations - we cannot protect the new and growing suburbs around Chisholm and Molonglo with part time stations. Response times will suffer and lives will be put at risk. All Canberrans deserve the same level of protection."

ESA RESPONSE:

There is no plan to introduce part time stations.

UFU CLAIM 4:

"A strong organisation - the Government must not remove firefighters from the emergency command centre or remove firefighter training, Community Resilience and Human Resources from the direction and control of firefighters. Changes like these will leave Fire and Rescue a much weaker organisation, less capable of protecting Canberra."

ESA RESPONSE:

Firefighting knowledge will be required within the Emergency 000 Communications Centre (ComCen) and to undertake the Incident Management Functions including command and control of firefighting resources, as is current practice during major emergencies.

The community is best served by having more firefighters on the road. The ESA's current model has the same amount of staff regardless of the number of calls per hour. Data shows that at 7:00pm we receive three times more calls to fires than at 3:00am, but currently we maintain the same staffing model in the ComCen at both times. This is an area of improvement. We need more operators at the right time. We need to scale up better for major incidents. Currently, we need to take more firefighters away from their fire appliances to staff the ComCen. The new model puts them where the community needs them most. Consistent with the "all hazards, all services" approach our new ComCen will be staffed by professional emergency call takers to ensure the right advice is provided, the correct service is dispatched and to help us provide faster warnings to the community. We'll have a better system when we have large scale storm events to track and record those people that need assistance so that our crews can attend quicker.

Each of our services will contribute to combined communications, training, human resources, and community resilience, to make our emergency services stronger and more able to protect Canberra and the ACT.

ESA also intends to remove administrative and rostering duties from the ComCen so the firefighters in there can focus exclusively on applying their technical knowledge to incidents rather than filling vacant shifts.

UFU CLAIM 5:

"A strong plan - ACT major bushfire plans are in disarray. The intended bushfire abatement zone, created after 2003 has been rolled back leaving the outer suburbs of Canberra exposed and vulnerable."

ESA RESPONSE:

The campaign claims that ACT major bushfire plans are in disarray. This could not be further from the truth.

Bushfire management is the subject of the Strategic Bushfire Management Plan. Version 3 of the Strategic Bushfire Management Plan was tabled in the Legislative Assembly in September 2014. The five year plan clearly details the Government's priorities for bushfire prevention and suppression across 12 key objectives.

All of the services associated with bushfire management and suppression have had significant investment and increases in capability since 2003. This includes more than 600 rural firefighters, close to 1,000 CFU volunteers, and Remote Area Firefighting Teams (RAFT). In addition, there are new vehicles, aerial firefighting assets and facilities and land management arrangements.

The existing response arrangements outline that the first response to all grass and bushfires in the ACT will be by the nearest available most appropriate resource, irrespective of jurisdiction or Service. Both ACT fire services continue to work together collaboratively and cohesively in responding to fires across both the built up and rural areas of the ACT.

UFU CLAIM 6:

"Ready for emerging threats - we are not ready for the increasing threats and challenges of terrorism, climate change, population growth and a rapid increase in non-fire rescue incidents such as rescues and car accidents."

ESA RESPONSE:

- ACT Fire & Rescue incidents overall increased from 9,773 in 2002/03 to 10,313 in 2014/15. This is a 5.5% increase in total incidents over 12 years or 0.5% average increase year on year.
- ACT Ambulance Service incidents overall increased from 26,599 in 2002/03 to 46,442 in 2014/15. This is a 74.6% increase in total incidents over 12 years or 6.2% average increase year on year.



ACT
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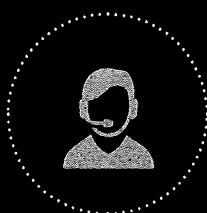


A PLAN TO PROTECT CANBERRA

OUR PLAN IS FOR THE PROTECTION OF CANBERRA AND TO CONTINUE TO REALISE A SAFER COMMUNITY. OUR STRATEGIC REFORM AGENDA ESTABLISHES A FRAMEWORK FOR CONTINUED SUCCESS AND EFFECTIVE UTILISATION OF OUR SERVICES TO DELIVER A COHESIVE, COLLABORATIVE, AND UNIFIED EMERGENCY SERVICES AGENCY.

The plan will include:

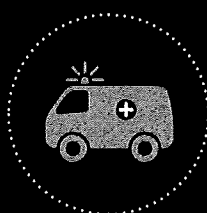
WORLD CLASS EMERGENCY 000 COMMUNICATION CENTRE



A single Communication Centre (ComCen) that meets the needs of the community and our four operational services.

- » More fire-fighters where the community needs them most
- » Faster response times to triple zero (000) calls
- » Faster warnings to the community
- » Better systems to scale up during large storm events
- » More professional emergency call takers to ensure we continue to provide the right advice and best service response

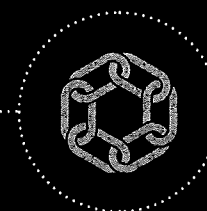
AUSTRALIA'S LEADING AMBULANCE SERVICE



Increased capability of our ambulance service to meet growing community demand and maintain our response times, which are currently the fastest nationally and the best patient satisfaction scores.

- » More ambulances on the road
- » Even faster response times
- » Increased capability and expanded services
- » Enhanced ambulance workforce
- » Working towards a plan to implement a system of registration for paramedicine

A STRONGER COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP



We have developed stronger partnerships with the community to help identify and manage risk and improve bushfire management. We are actively ensuring our community is better prepared for bushfire by:

- » Pinpointing exactly where we are most vulnerable as a community
- » Using science to better map where our risks are greatest
- » Partnering and support our farmers in the bushfire abatement zone to ensure fuel management and access for firefighters improves
- » Reviewing the role of our Community Fire Units
- » Continuing to recognise our volunteers in the community as a significant asset in the protective model of our collective assets
- » Engaging our firefighters and emergency workers, both paid and volunteer, to door knock the streets that are most vulnerable, delivering personal messages to educate the community of the impact of bushfires and how to protect themselves and their families

A STRONG AGENCY FOR THE MODERN WORLD



The ESA aims to match service demand to meet the community's needs by ensuring our emergency service personnel have the most adequate and appropriate resources to allow them to continue to deliver high levels of service to the community.

We have delivered:

- » A new Strategic Plan with a mission of "working together to care and protect"
- » Executive restructure to include Governance and Logistics, People and Culture, Risk and Planning functions to better support our own people
- » Commissioned four stations in four years
- » Better response for bushfire
- » A new Strategic Bushfire Management Plan
- » An award-winning CBR Bushfire Ready Campaign
- » Investment of 12 replacement ambulances and firefighting appliances in 2017/18 and 2018/19
- » Additional firefighters, paramedics and additional crew at West Belconnen

We will:

- » Continue to upgrade the radio communications and computer aided dispatch system
- » Build a new ACT State Emergency station at Calwell
- » Upgrade Fyshwick Fire & Rescue and Guises Creek Rural Fire Service station
- » Employ an additional patient transport crew
- » Commission a new helicopter for the South Care aero medical retrieval service
- » Improve the ESA website and warnings systems

50:50

LEADING WORKPLACE DIVERSITY

The Emergency Services Agency has taken the lead nationally in committing to 50/50 gender recruitment recognising the value of a more diverse and inclusive workforce.

- » In 2016 we have been successful in recruiting 25% women in our most recent intake and we will continue to improve
- » 50:50 Fire & Rescue recruit college targets

ESA KEY FOCUS AREAS AT A GLANCE

- » Even faster response times
- » A better prepared and informed community
- » More frontline resources to meet growing demand
- » Risk based bushfire management
- » A more diverse workforce



ACT
Government



Rutland, Kaylee

From: Mavity, Matthew
Sent: Friday, 26 August 2016 3:24 PM
To: Rutland, Kaylee; Jones, Mark
Subject: UFU campaign page. [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=Sensitive]

Hi guys, my quick response to the talking points raised by the UFU. I know it is very rough but it can be for internal (ESA) publication and let it leak from there.

Community communication is also necessary but that should be less specifically targeted and results oriented and future focussed. That, in and of itself, will reply to the UFU.

Kaylee and I have discussed the trend on facebook and it is a 1300% increase at 86 likes, which means it has gone from 6.5 to 86 likes. No big deal just yet.

It is important to reply with dispassionate facts though.

I can chase the missing figures next week if anyone has the stones.

Cheers

mav

So what they actually said is:

1. the population has increased by 5500 people per year since 2006,
2. Non fire rescues have increased by 1.7% per year since 2003, and
3. Overtime has increased 100% in a year.

What they didn't say.

1. Demand has decreased by% over the same period,
2. Non fire incidents are poorly counted and defined by fire and rescue managers and have actually remained stable for the last 5 years, and
3. Recruitment has occurred to address staff shortages at firefighter ranks and an investigation has commenced into officer overtime which is largely unexplained because all positions at those ranks are filled.

The policy positions stated are equally vulnerable to facts:

1. ESA is recruiting to replace staff shortages. A work force plan is being developed to address staff turnover. Medically unfit staff contribute to the staff shortage and ESA is looking for ways to redeploy them out of firefighting positions so that they can be filled by fit staff.
2. Non rescue incident demand increase of 1.7% per year over 10 years can be covered by the 2% (?) drop in fire incident demand over the same period and levelling off of fire alarm calls which is 53% of all fire and rescue incidents per year.

Proper equipment:

1. The HAZMAT appliance which is staffed 24/7 attends less than 400 incidents per year. Over the 15 years it has been staffed full time it averages
2. The Bronto aerial appliance is a very technical vehicle which was selected on the advice of ACT firefighters in a committee and it requires specialist support to keep it operational. It is used approximately XX times per year for all calls and is deployed to work at incidents (set up) XX times per year on average since it was purchased in 2009?
3. The breathing apparatus support vehicle is used at incidents where compressed air cylinders are required such as fires and HAZMAT incidents. The HAZMAT appliance is also used for this purpose on occasions because it has the capacity, equipment and crew to allow this. Again this vehicle was procured and designed on the advice of professional firefighters from ACTFR. In addition to these capabilities there is a Platform On

Demand (POD) that can support breathing apparatus operations should it be required. It has never been deployed operationally (check).

No part time stations:

1. There is no plan to introduce part time arrangements for existing stations. In fact the reforms in Comcen are partly aimed at releasing firefighters from answering phones so that they can staff an extra fire truck (appliance).
2. The government would like to discuss with the UFU future stations being introduced in Molonglo and the city. In order to make this happen sooner the government is proposing introducing these NEW stations on a demand based roster until the workload justifies 24/7 staffing.
3. No jobs will be lost from Comcen reform. Staff will be moved back to station duties to deliver service to the ACT community from a fire appliance.

A strong organisation:

1. No staff are being cut from re organising positions within ESA. There is no staffing agreement or agreed organisational chart for fire and rescue support functions and management. ESA is trying to comply with the enterprise agreement by agreeing on a structure,
2. Staff will be allocated into areas with similar functions which will assist all services in the ESA. Training, where common or where demand is greatest, will be dealt with by a combined services approach. The same is true of Human resources management, The Fire and Rescue staff are being moved into an area with HR qualifications and expertise to support their role in HR management.
3. Community resilience and education is an all hazards approach and the ESA believe that a combined services approach will better address the needs of the community with a group of experts from all services. This will also allow effort to be focussed on a needs basis and leading up to peak seasons.

A strong plan:

1. The ESA has an all services all hazards approach to emergency management. The aim of ESA is for all services to collaborate and support one another so the community get the best result.
2. Bushfire management is a the subject of a Strategic Bushfire Management Plan. The experts in TAMs (Parks) and RFS as well as the bushfire council are responsible for the SBMP. All of the services associated with wildfire management and suppression have had significant investment and increases in capability since 2003. This includes 1000 CFU volunteers, 570 RFS volunteers, Remote Area Firefighting Teams (RAFT) and 100 paid professional Parks and forestry firefighters. In addition there are new vehicles, aerial firefighting assets and facilities and land management arrangements.

Ready for emerging threats:

1. The ESA is future focussed and is building an all agencies capability to best meet the challenges of Global warming and terrorism. No one service can realistically expect to deal with a major disaster in isolation. That is why the ESA is focussed on all services working together,
2. Any increase in non fire emergencies is currently balanced by falling demand in other areas such as automatic fire alarms and structure fires. Should the evidence we collect show a supportable case for altering resource allocation for a particular threat, risk or hazard the ESA will do that in a rational and considered fashion with evidence as the supporting framework for decision making,
3. Population growth is a key driver of the SURP and new stations or relocated stations are underway to align with population increase and movements. Where evidence supports additional resources or sites for any ESA service it will be incorporated into the strategic plan.
4. The UFU have indicated their unwillingness to discuss flexible staffing arrangements for new sites which limits the ESAs capacity to match resources to demand.

Cheers

Mav

Jones, Mark

From: Jones, Mark
Sent: Friday, 26 August 2016 9:42 AM
To: Lane, Dominic; Brown, Mark; Rutland, Kaylee; MarandoESA, Frank
Subject: Ideas and notes from yesterday afternoon's meeting [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]
Attachments: Proposed lines to take.docx

Just putting these up for criticism and improvement. Best to all, Mark

Mark Jones - Director, Strategic Reform Agenda

Emergency Services Agency, ACT Government

Phone: **02 6205 9077** Mobile :

Email: mark.jones@act.gov.au

9 Amberley Avenue Fairbairn GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601



Responding to the UFU's most recent outbursts

So as to reassure the public, it is time to take the hyperbole and alarmism out of the debate on the future provision of emergency services in the ACT. The ACT is one of the safest places imaginable to live in terms of fire safety but, despite this achievement, the government has not been complacent. Canberra and the ACT's population has steadily grown and the ACT Government has maintained a matching steady increase in funding for dealing with emergencies against the backdrop of a steady decrease in demand for fire and rescue services. The proactive and preventative measures which are now commonplace help to maintain very high safety levels for this one we protect.

The Government is tasked with keeping people safe and, through its support for the ESA and its services, has done so well and consistently.

In stating the future retirement plans of its members, the UFU seems to be in possession of the retirement intentions of many of our staff whom have not yet made their employer aware of those intentions. In any case, we will and always have ensured that workforce plans exist to provide the right number of trained emergency response professionals are available in all of our emergency services. One of the proposed reforms, the ComCen, is in fact likely to free up some trained firefighters to return to their primary role.

Although not previously raised with the management of the ESA, the statements made publicly by their union that our firefighters are suffering fatigue due to short staffing and the fact that some of them perform overtime which their union now describes as onerous is of concern to the service and we will, as a result of the concerns being highlighted, consider the full range of factors affecting the fatigue levels of our staff such as overtime, personal leave and sickness, returning people to front line duties from non-statutory roles and any secondary employments which may be contributory. In this way, we will address the concerns expressed by the UFU

The ACT government already employs a comparatively high proportion of firefighters compared to its population base. Of the 350 firefighters employed, only ?? of them are available for emergency response at any given time due a range of factors such as shift arrangements. 9teh shift arrangement mean that they are scheduled to work 65? days and 65? nights per year and this means we employ 6 firefighters for every person required for duty)

We would not wish to diminish the role played by many unseen workers who makes sure that those we serve are safe. It is important to remember that it's not only the action of emergency responders that make people, safe. Many of the features which have contributed to the fantastic safety levels people enjoy in the ACT are a result of good preventative regulations, an educated population and good strategies to inform and make people aware of risks. Making people safe and safer entails far more than simply ensuring good levels of response are available.

Canberra has comparatively few tall buildings and all of them are constructed to modern safety standards which allow for protection and escape of occupants should fire occur. When they are over certain prescribed heights, firefighting installations are mandatory and the stock of buildings in our city are very well equipped. The current aerial appliance is not utilised frequently and contrary to the UFU's assertions, is very rarely unavailable for operational deployment

The ACT emergency services have been transformed and greatly modernised since the events of 2003 and significant improvements have been made in equipment, risk awareness, communications and information systems, training and, vitally, liaison between the various agencies and services tasked with ensuring public safety. Furthermore, the forthcoming implementation of the Strategic Bushfire Management Plan by the Rural Fire Service will add yet more resilience and improvement to the system. The Parks department have also greatly enhanced and developed their fire management capabilities which are complementary to the RFS Firefighting efforts. Coupled to an aggressive fuel reduction programme, although the climactic

events that caused previous firestorms might re-occur, the likelihood of a catastrophic impact in future is greatly reduced.

Whilst the public should always be alert and aware of possible risks to their well-being, and the ESA takes steps to appropriately inform them of emerging risks as a matter of course, irresponsible scaremongering does nothing to help an informed debate to take place and can cause unnecessary angst and concerns. The ACT's emergency services agency has consistently improved its service provision in recent years and the people living in the ACT enjoy remarkable levels of safety as a result. It is greatly disappointing that a union would resort to shameless and irresponsible scaremongering for political purposes.

Even though the ESA and its services have delivered good outcomes over many years, that doesn't mean that we shouldn't continuously try to improve and refine service delivery to deliver continued good value. There are no plans for cuts but it makes sense that any growth in expenditure of taxpayers' money should be closely linked to growth in demand.

The SRA agenda is all about making service improvements for the future and using modern techniques and technology to its best advantage. A number of key reforms such as: reforming the ComCen, building and maintaining a suitable set of stations for the future, improving Ambulance Service delivery and improving Fire Service management are incorporated in the SRA.

The lines I offered as strategic outcomes of the new communications: What are we trying to achieve?

- that staff and stakeholders are appropriately and accurately informed
- that the media are well briefed and "close" enough to the ESA to allow fluent and swift external publication
- that, when emergencies occur or negative comments are offered, stakeholders have the knowledge or access to knowledge to make informed decisions and attitudes

Rutland, Kaylee

From: Jones, Mark
Sent: Tuesday, 30 August 2016 11:34 AM
To: Lane, Dominic; Brown, Mark; Rutland, Kaylee
Subject: I have tidied both of these a bit [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]
Attachments: ESA statements on reform .docx; Proposed lines to take.docx

Just for consideration at this stage MJ

Mark Jones - Director, Strategic Reform Agenda

Emergency Services Agency, ACT Government

Phone: **02 6205 9077** Mobile :

Email: mark.jones@act.gov.au

9 Amberley Avenue Fairbairn GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601



ACT
Government



Responding to the UFU's most recent outbursts

It is time to take the hyperbole and alarmism out of the debate on the future provision of emergency services in the ACT

Canberra and the ACT's population has steadily grown and the ACT Government has maintained a matching steady increase in funding for dealing with emergencies against the backdrop of a steady decrease in demand for fire and rescue services. The proactive and preventative measures which are now commonplace help to maintain very high safety levels for this one we protect.

The UFU seems to be in possession of the retirement intentions of many of our staff but they are yet to make their employer aware of those intentions.

The suggestions that our firefighters are suffering fatigue due to short staffing and the fact that some of them perform overtime which their union now describes as onerous is of concern to the service and we will, as a result of the concerns being highlighted, consider the full range of factors affecting the fatigue levels of our staff such as overtime, absenteeism and any secondary employments which may be contributory.

Canberra has comparatively few tall buildings and all of them are constructed to modern safety standards which allow for protection and escape of occupants should fire occur. When they are over certain prescribed heights, firefighting installations are mandatory and the stock of buildings in our city are very well equipped. The current aerial appliance is not utilised frequently and contrary to the UFU's assertions, is very rarely unavailable for operational deployment

The ACT emergency services have been transformed and greatly modernised since the events of 2003 and significant improvements have been made in equipment, risk awareness, communications and information systems, training and, vitally, liaison between the various agencies and services tasked with ensuring public safety. Furthermore, the forthcoming implementation of the Strategic Bushfire Management Plan by the Rural Fire Service will add yet more resilience and improvement to the system. The Parks department have also greatly enhanced and developed their fire management capabilities which are complementary to the RFS Firefighting efforts.

Whilst the public should always be alert and aware of possible risks to their well-being, irresponsible scaremongering does nothing to help an informed debate to take place.

The ACT's emergency services agency has consistently improved its service provision in recent years and the people living in the ACT enjoy remarkable levels of safety as a result. It is greatly disappointing that a union would resort to shameless and irresponsible scaremongering for political purposes without realising

Responding to the UFU's most recent outbursts

So as to reassure the public, it is time to take the hyperbole and alarmism out of the debate on the future provision of emergency services in the ACT. The ACT is one of the safest places imaginable to live in terms of fire safety but, despite this achievement, the government has not been complacent. Canberra and the ACT's population has steadily grown and the ACT Government has maintained a matching steady increase in funding for dealing with emergencies against the backdrop of a steady decrease in demand for fire and rescue services. The proactive and preventative measures which are now commonplace help to maintain very high safety levels for this one we protect.

The Government is tasked with keeping people safe and, through its support for the ESA and its services, has done so well and consistently.

In stating the future retirement plans of its members, the UFU seems to be in possession of the retirement intentions of many of our staff whom have not yet made their employer aware of those intentions. In any case, we will and always have ensured that workforce plans exist to provide the right number of trained emergency response professionals are available in all of our emergency services. One of the proposed reforms, the ComCen, is in fact likely to free up some trained firefighters to return to their primary role.

Although not previously raised with the management of the ESA, the statements made publicly by their union that our firefighters are suffering fatigue due to short staffing and the fact that some of them perform overtime which their union now describes as onerous is of concern to the service and we will, as a result of the concerns being highlighted, consider the full range of factors affecting the fatigue levels of our staff such as overtime, personal leave and sickness, returning people to front line duties from non-statutory roles and any secondary employments which may be contributory. In this way, we will address the concerns expressed by the UFU

The ACT government already employs a comparatively high proportion of firefighters compared to its population base. Of the 350 firefighters employed, only 52 of them are required for emergency response at any given time due a range of factors such as shift arrangements. (the shift arrangement mean that they are scheduled to work around 140 shifts per year and this means we employ over 6 firefighters for every person required for duty)

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- that, when emergencies occur or negative comments are offered, stakeholders have the knowledge or access to knowledge to make informed decisions and attitudes

Jones, Mark

From: Jones, Mark
Sent: Thursday, 1 September 2016 5:33 PM
To: Mark Jones
Subject: Fwd: UFU stats claims [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]
Attachments: image001.png; ATT00001.htm; Response to UFU .docx; ATT00002.htm

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: "MarandoESA, Frank" <Frank.MarandoESA@act.gov.au>
Date: 1 September 2016 at 17:29:21 AEST
To: "Bisset, Ellena" <Ellena.Bisset@act.gov.au>
Cc: "Lane, Dominic" <Dominic.Lane@act.gov.au>, "Brown, Mark" <Mark.Brown@act.gov.au>, "Jones, Mark" <Mark.Jones@act.gov.au>, "Cutrupi, Darren" <Darren.Cutrupi@act.gov.au>, "Johnson, Nigel" <Nigel.Johnson@act.gov.au>
Subject: RE: UFU stats claims [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Hi Ellena,

Dominic has cleared the attached.

Thank you.
 Frank

Frank Marando | Manager, Executive Support Unit
 Phone: 6207 0367 | Fax: 6207 8447 | Email: frank.marandoESA@act.gov.au
 ACT Emergency Services Agency | Justice and Community Safety | ACT Government
 Level 1, 9 Amberley Avenue, Fairbairn | GPO Box 158, Canberra ACT 2601 | www.esa.act.gov.au

As indicated in the *2015 Report on Government Services* data, over the period from 2008-09 to 2013-14, fire incidents declined by an annual average rate of over 10%. Other incidents, including rescue activity, false alarms and hazardous conditions, increased by 1% per annum.

Rescue related incidents increased by an annual average of 1.4% over the period, while hazardous condition incidents decreased by around 3.6% per annum.

The ACT had the highest proportion of system initiated false alarms at 56% of all incidents compared with 27% nationally. The ACT's high proportion of false alarms can largely be explained by a greater number of automated fire systems per head of population, compared to other jurisdictions.

The UFU continues to claim that decisions on reform are being made without supporting data. This data is included in the Expenditure Review Report of the ESA. The unions participated in the Expenditure Review of the ESA as members of the Review Steering Committee (RSC). Whilst the Expenditure Review Report (the Report) is not a public document, a draft of the Report was provided to all RSC members, including the UFU.

It is important to point out that the 10% figure quoted in the decline of fire incidents is not key to the rationale for the Strategic Reform Agenda (SRA). This has previously been explained to the UFU by the Minister and by the ESA Commissioner. The strategic drivers for reform are based on the need to better match costs to demand and to ensure that good value is delivered, whilst maintaining the very high level outcomes currently demonstrated. At no stage during the SRA process, or at any other time, has the ESA indicated that it will be cutting the ACTF&R service and the UFU stating so is directly misleading and false.

In relation to the trends in demand upon ACTF&R, it is a positive thing that, as Canberra's population, continues to grow, the total number of fires is not increasing. The increased performance of our firefighters in confining fires to their room of origin and the growing amount of community safety work in which firefighters are involved are also great outcomes.

It has always been acknowledged that the firefighters of ACTF&R undertake a great deal of work that is not emergency response, and it is certain that the broader work they undertake in the preventative agenda will become more and more valuable over future years. By any measure however, the emergency demand levels upon the ACTF&R are not onerous and this reflects the success of a range of safety strategies.

Despite the comparatively high safety levels enjoyed by our residents and the comparatively low operational demands upon the Fire & Rescue Service, no plans exist and no proposals are being considered to make cuts to the Fire & Rescue Service. As with all emergency response strategies, any future changes to the arrangement of any emergency services which are considered will be based upon data, facts and providing continued high levels of public safety services. It has always been our priority to involve our staff and their unions in any such proposals.

Rutland, Kaylee

From: Mavity, Matthew
Sent: Friday, 2 September 2016 10:24 AM
To: Jones, Mark
Cc: Lane, Dominic; Rutland, Kaylee
Subject: Rescue figures
Attachments: Road accident rescue figures.doc

Hi all,

attached are the rescue figures for the last 5 financial years as published in annual reports.

There is a lack of detail on what was actually done at the incidents due to only two stop codes applying to motor vehicle crash incidents. I explain this in the paper attached.

I would like to point out that the UFU on the ACTONFIRE site quote a 22% increase in rescues since 2003. That is what they have published.

As yet I have been unable to confirm this or otherwise. However, I do note that the increase equates to a 1.7% per annum increase which is hardly overwhelming when one considers that at many of these incidents we conduct no rescue we just manage hazards until the police arrive.

Necessary work to be sure but not a rescue by any reasonable measure.

Regards

Matthew

Road accident rescue figures.

Road accident rescue incidents of all types are recorded in the annual report as one figure.

This means that the severity of the accident is not recorded in the annual report and as such the role that ACTF&R undertook is not clarified. ACTFR may have conducted traffic control and swept up glass all the way to an extrication involving hydraulic tools.

This occurs because there are 2 stop codes that refer specifically to motor vehicle crashes. There used to be 3 relevant stop codes but one has been removed. The current codes are:

Code 351 (Vehicle accident with injuries and \or extrication of victim(s) from mobile property), and

Code 352 Mobile property crash (renamed from vehicle accident no injuries).

The figures reported in annual reports from 2010/11 to 2014/15 are:

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Road rescues	1095	1021	1147	1057	1129
Other rescues	89	75	146	141	170

As can be seen, there is a steady increase in other rescues (which includes animal rescue) and a bit of variability in motor vehicle incidents but it gravitates around an average of 1090 incidents per annum over the last 5 years.

In the ROGs report. Details in the 2016 report are not as clearly stated but non fire related rescues is the area which deals with road crash incidents.

The ACT has recorded around 400 rescues a year in road crash rescue. The figure is imprecise due to the lack of detail in the graphs. This seems to indicate that of the roughly 1100 calls per annum to road crash incidents around 36% involve a rescue or extrication.

This means that the ACT is recording approximately the same number of rescues as QLD and South Australia who have far larger populations.

The recording codes are not reflective of the actual role of fire services at these incidents and should probably be changed to vehicle accident with injuries but no extrication and then vehicle accident with extrication to separate the two types of activities.

As a side note, there is no organisational guidance to Station Officers on the selection of stop codes. This results in variability due to personal subjectivity.

The SES and RFS have distilled the types of stop codes they are likely to need to limit the selection offered for each type of incident.

Rutland, Kaylee

From: Mavity, Matthew
Sent: Friday, 2 September 2016 12:26 PM
To: Jones, Mark
Cc: Rutland, Kaylee
Subject: RE: Response information from annual reports.
Attachments: six years of annual report data 3.docx

Hi guys,

I just ran over the data in the table and averaged the calls over 6 years (right hand column) I then showed with a plus or a minus whether calls for each year were up or down on average.

This is not the best way to portray data but it does show where demand is rising or falling over the last 6 years.

See new table.

UFU use of historical data can be questioned on the basis of relevance.

Regards

mav

From: Jones, Mark
Sent: Friday 2 September 2016 12:15
To: Mavity, Matthew
Cc: Lane, Dominic; Rutland, Kaylee
Subject: Re: Response information from annual reports.

Great work Matthew. These are the sorts of databases that the new comcen will update as a matter of normal business. Best, Mark

Sent from my iPhone

On 2 Sep 2016, at 11:39, Mavity, Matthew <Matthew.Mavity@act.gov.au> wrote:

Hi all please see the attached table for a summary of ACTFR activity over the past 6 years.

I think it is important to note:

1. The number of incidents overall is declining. Thus any increase in a particular type of incident is offset against falling demand elsewhere,
2. Road crash rescue incidents are fairly stable around the 6 year average of 1092 calls per annum,
3. Other rescues include animal rescues (kitten in tree) and still only represent one call every 3 days as an average or one every two days based on last years figures. To be clear one incident every 2 days divided by 9 pumpers!, and
- 4 Automatic fire alarms still make up over 50% of all incidents attended by ACTFR.

Regards

Matthew

<six years of annual report data.docx>

Six years of annual report data.

Year	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	6 year average
Structure fires	285 +	270 -	296 +	277 -	268 -	271 -	278
Bush and grass fires	268 +	142 -	199 -	290 +	210 -	193 -	217
Car fires	331 +	237 +	221 -	195 -	175 -	185 -	224
Other fires	516 +	251 -	254 -	246 -	207 -	205 -	280
Total fires	1400 +	900 -	970 -	1008 +	860 -	854 -	999
Road crashes	1105 +	1095 +	1021 -	1147 +	1057 -	1129 +	1092
Other rescues *	128 +	89 -	75 -	146 +	141 +	170 +	111
Medical calls	295 +	313 +	276 +	160 -	155 -	162 -	227
HAZMAT **	218 -	473 +	408 +	415 +	315 -	449 -	380
Automatic fire alarms	5721 -	6465 +	6280 +	5892 -	5725 -	5731 -	5969
Storm calls	1062 +	1467 +	1203 +	955 +	868 +	167 -	954
other	1201 +	1112 -	1142 -	1021 -	1021 -	1659 +	1193
Total Incidents	11130 +	11914 +	11375 +	10744 -	10178 -	10321 -	10944

* Other rescues includes animal rescues.

** In 2014/15 hazardous material incidents was changed to hazardous conditions which includes electrical hazards and is not a Hazmat response.

The key issues to note from the above is that since 2009/10 there has been a **decline in incidents overall**. So even if certain types of calls are experiencing increases in demand, the overall decrease in incidents allows additional resources to be allocated to shifting demand.

Fire incidents of all types have been falling since 2009/10. Structure fires have remained fairly steady but all other types have decreased.

Road crash incidents (and crash is important because there may be no rescue involved in a response) are steady at about 1090 per annum as an average, or 3 calls per day across the district of 9 stations.

Other rescues are increasing, this figure includes animal rescues (so kitten in a tree incidents). The average is 125 calls per year across the district or one call every three days.

Other incidents are increasing because we are documenting non response activity better now.

Internal messaging

Dear colleagues,

Refer to Last week's station opening

Extracts/ Key aspects of doms and ministers speeches

As senior managers, it concerns us greatly when alarmist propaganda is used to try and scare people so as to justify incorrect statements. The public in ACT have a right to be proud of the emergency services here - they are better protected than in most other places in Australia because of massive and ongoing government investment.

It seems necessary to state a few facts:

The volunteer services of the ACTESA have steadily improved year on year and are well equipped, led and prepared for the challenges they will face.

ACTAS has steadily improved its performance over a range of measures and, despite continually increasing emergency demand, has consistently remained one of the best in Australia. The further improvements that will result from the "Blueprint for Change" project will create the circumstances for yet more improvements.

All of our services are well funded and, despite claims by the UFU, no cuts to any of our services are planned or even under consideration. Any claims otherwise are wrong, deliberately misleading and alarmist and we do not know why anyone would make such stories up.

The ongoing COMCEN reform is not going to cause greater risk to anyone nor is it going to delay or diminish the speed and efficacy of our emergency responses.

The UFU has expressed concerns on the levels of overtime being undertaken by its members, and has stated that they are suffering fatigue. We will investigate these new claims openly and transparently.

Jones, Mark

From: Jones, Mark
Sent: Tuesday, 6 September 2016 10:26 AM
To: Rutland, Kaylee
Subject: Re: ESA - refuting claims by United Firefighters Union [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=Sensitive]

All confirmed Kaylee

Will call soon - Mark

Sent from my iPhone

On 6 Sep 2016, at 09:36, Rutland, Kaylee <Kaylee.Rutland@act.gov.au> wrote:

Hi Mark,

Can I please confirm the following:

- I will not pursue a new webpage and instead use the ESA website for publishing information.
- I am to continue with the development of content for the ESA webpage including copywriting our key messages for staff and using supporting graphics/imagery.
- I will work with Frank on the Min Brief draft to be provided by lunchtime.
- The highlighted paragraph below says we will publish our data. Can I clarify that we are publishing internally, or externally or both? And what data are we specifically referring to? I need to clarify this as we have so much data on our hands, what should I be focusing on?

Could you please confirm I am ok to utilise Coordinate to help produce the copy and graphics for internal messaging. Quotes provided below:

1. Copy and key messages. I want to keep this as short, simple and digestible as possible. We will take Dom's key messages and repurpose them for the easy digestion of staff \$2240 exc GST
2. Supporting infographics to reinforce key messages \$3360 exc GST

Regards,

Kaylee Rutland
 Internal Communications Manager
 Strategic Reform Agenda Program

Phone: (02) 6205 6746

ACT Emergency Services Agency

The ACT Emergency Services Agency (ESA) is the ACT Government organisation charged with providing emergency management services to the Canberra community.

[Read more...](#)

<image001.png>

From: Jones, Mark
Sent: Tuesday, 6 September 2016 9:02 AM
To: Mark Jones
Cc: MarandoESA, Frank; Rutland, Kaylee; Kaylee.mcinnnes@gmail.com
Subject: Re: ESA - refuting claims by United Firefighters Union [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=Sensitive]

Hi Frank/ Kaylee

If you send the raw draft to me by lunchtime, I'll give it attention during the break fromMy course. Thanks, Mark

Sent from my iPhone

On 6 Sep 2016, at 08:31, Lane, Dominic <Dominic.Lane@act.gov.au> wrote:

Mark

The priority for today is to draft a brief to the minister.

1. The draft brief by 1600 to my inbox please, expressing concern regarding the UFU's recent commentary regarding ACT's apparent lack of prepared end for an emergency. And ESA's intention to refute those messages to all staff and volunteers.

It will also be to advise the minister of my intention to publish some of ESA's data on our public website.

There are two main concerns in relations to the UFU's commentary; (a) the lack of recognition the role the ACT RFS has in bushfire prevention, mitigation and response. The premise the UFU is attempting to draw is only paid firefighters can effectively protect Canberra is divisive and goes against the objects of the emergencies act and ESA's mission of working together. (B) the attempts to politicise public safety, is unhelpful when successive governments have clearly demonstrated their willingness to listen to good policy advice and repeatedly fund new initiatives based upon robust business cases.

The advise to the minister will be ESA's messaging to staff is to be by way of a number of means

one: is to directly refute each of the claims of the six (or so) messages the UFU is running (One of the other factors that has not been picked up on by SRA team is the disparity between the commissioner's notifiable instrument for bushfire stand up days and F&r practice, this is driving OT up).

Two: commissioners speech

Three: publish our data and circulate it.

Four: SRA director is about to commence a series of staff workshops on outcomes of COMCEN consultation

All of the above should be able to be directly attributable to what is already in the public space from either; performance data or quotes from the minister and myself.

I disagree with the view about not using reform, Now is not the time to go into defence mode, the whole discussion over the past two months has been about how to express we accept we have made mistakes and we need to do better.

Otherwise we might as well not even bother with the COMCEN.

I am not coming in to work today but will be reviewing emails, early drafts preferred before 1600 if possible.

Regards

Dom

Sent from my iPad

On 5 Sep 2016, at 5:51 PM, Jones, Mark <Mark.Jones@act.gov.au> wrote:

Hi Kaylee

Maybe a little twist on titles - "making Canberra as safe as it's ever been"?

The pressing nature of the timing is clear but you have done much in a short timescale. Keeping the messaging tight to the ministers and commissioners statements is wise and cohesive. I agree with SRA terminology point - what we choose to term it internally may not mean much to those we are now trying to reach.

Good work and I am sure the new energy around placing the facts in the public domain will help counter the alarmism that detractors are attempting to stir up.

Thank, Mark

Sent from my iPhone

On 5 Sep 2016, at 17:40, Rutland, Kaylee <Kaylee.Rutland@act.gov.au> wrote:

Hi Dom

In speaking with yourself and then Coordinate (government panel contractor) this morning we have come up with the following plan which is achievable by Friday.

We believe creating a one page website is a good opportunity to position against the negative claims of the Unions while presenting a case for the positive developments, investment, collaboration and cohesion within the ESA. I think we need to be careful how this is presented to avoid giving the Union campaign further oxygen and appearing as though the ESA is being reactive and defensive.

As such, I believe we should create a webpage around the narrative of a “Plan to Protect Canberra” or a “Safer Canberra” which presents a modernised, integrated and coordinated ESA. This should be the agenda we push in delivering a larger campaign towards the start of the bushfire season.

The webpage, should sit off the ESA website and be shaped around the Strategic Reform Agenda but not specifically refer to the SRA. Some considerations around this -

1. We think we should avoid the language of “Strategic Reform Agenda”. While this is appropriate internally, I don’t think it works externally. Firstly, ‘Reform” implies the system and services were not effective and potentially adds fuel to the Unions claims. Secondly, its not consumer friendly language and we should avoid using bureaucratic speak that may create a barrier for cutting through – we need to break this down to be as simple and digestible as possible.

2. I believe we should avoid having this campaign run within the ESA website style. Again, its important this message is crafted and delivered appropriately for the audience. The limitations of the ESA website style will mean the presentation of key messaging will be limited and appear more like a media release than a user friendly and engaging campaign. If this is the case, it will look weaker when positioned against the Union campaign, which is very effective in its presentation and communication strategy. Doing this will of course aggravate timeframes and the budget, but I believe it will get you the best possible result and provide a platform to build on in the near future.

3. We will prepare a letter from yourself as ESA Commissioner to be sent to all staff and Volunteers that delivers the same sentiment as the Minister's speech for a “safer Canberra” through (insert mission statement), which encourages staff to view more information on the website.

Re timeframes and costings. We will need to get onto this almost right away to meet the deadline.

In summary, I believe we should aim to deliver the following -

1. A very simple type based campaign identity 'Plan to protect Canberra'. This can be used for the larger campaign too – think of this as stage one.
2. Copy and key messages. We want to keep this as short, simple and digestible as possible.
3. Supporting graphics to reinforce key messages
4. One page website

I'm happy to refine and work through this strategy if it doesn't meet your expectations tomorrow morning. We will need to begin drafting by 10am tomorrow to achieve the deadline. The investment for ESA to deliver the above is approximately \$12,000, keeping in mind we will build on the "Safer Canberra" or "Plan to Protect Canberra" in the coming weeks.

Please let me know if you would like me to proceed?

Regards,
Kaylee

This email, and any attachments, may be confidential and also privileged. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the sender and delete all copies of this transmission along with any attachments immediately. You should not copy or use it for any purpose, nor disclose its contents to any other person.

<9052FDF9-4100-42C6-8F6B-
7D1B75C93D84[37].png>

<image002.png>

<image003.png>



ACT
Government

Justice and Community Safety

MINISTERIAL BRIEF

GPO Box 158 Canberra ACT 2601 | phone: 02 6207 0500

www.justice.act.gov.au

UNCLASSIFIED

To: Minister for Police and Emergency Services

From: Commissioner ACT Emergency Services Agency

Subject: *ACT on Fire Campaign*

Critical Date: Routine

Critical Reason: N/A

TRIM No.: 2016/004693

Date Rec'd Minister's Office 1/9/16

- DG (JACS) 1/9/16 JS
- DDG 1/9/16

Purpose

1. To brief you on the *ACT on Fire* campaign (<http://actonfire.com.au/>) which has been authorised by the United Firefighters Union (UFU).

Background

2. The *ACT on Fire* campaign claims that the ACT Government is proposing plans and actions which will undermine the capacity to protect the people of Canberra. The six key priorities of their campaign are:
 1. More firefighters;
 2. Proper equipment;
 3. No part-time stations;
 4. A strong organisation;
 5. A strong plan; and
 6. Ready for emerging threats.
3. The UFU are running a campaign targeting all candidates standing at the 2016 ACT Election. They have had a series of media articles published in the past few weeks, and were handing out brochures at the community open day for the new Belconnen Ambulance and Fire & Rescue Station. They are also using the Facebook page 'ACT Firefighters' to drive campaign activity.

Government Commitment – Government Priority

4. Community safety.

Issues

5. The attempts by the UFU to politicise public safety through this campaign is unhelpful, particularly when successive governments have clearly demonstrated their willingness to listen to good policy advice and repeatedly fund new initiatives based upon robust business cases. As with all emergency response strategies, changes to any arrangements are based on data, facts and providing continued high levels of public safety services. It has always been the ACT Emergency Services Agency's priority to involve staff and their unions in any such proposals.

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6. While it is not clear at this stage exactly what impact the UFU campaign is having on the community, I believe it is important to counter any messages to our staff and volunteers that may be considered divisive and unhelpful. I intend to write to our staff and volunteers, refuting the six key priorities of the UFU campaign, and providing supporting data for decisions around the Strategic Reform Agenda (SRA). Despite their involvement in the Expenditure Review of the ESA, the UFU continues to claim that decisions on reform are being made without supporting data.
7. As well as performance data, I intend on publishing some of the key messages and quotes delivered by you (Minister Corbell MLA), and myself, regarding the SRA. Some of these messages will also be reinforced by the Director of the SRA team, who is about to commence a series of staff workshops on the outcomes of the Communications Centre (ComCen) consultation.
8. Attachment A provides the six key priorities of the UFU campaign, and the sort of message I intend to deliver to refute each of the priorities.

Financial Implications

9. Nil associated with this brief.

JACS Directorate and Cross Directorate Consultation

10. Nil associated with this brief.

External Consultation

11. Nil associated with this brief.

Benefits/Sensitivities

12. Should this campaign grow in numbers and/or attract any further media attention, it is important that the community is provided with factual information in relation to each of the key priorities.

Media Implications

13. As indicated above, the campaign has attracted media attention.

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Recommendations

That you:

1. note the information contained in this brief; and

Noted / Please Discuss

2. note that the ESA intends to release messages to staff and volunteers, refuting the six key priorities of the UFU's *ACT on Fire* campaign, and providing supporting data for decisions around the SRA.

Agreed / Not Agreed / Please Discuss

Simon Corbell MLA

9 9 16
.../.../...

Minister's Comments

Signatory Name:	Dominic Lane	Phone:	x78383
Title:	Commissioner ACT Emergency Services Agency		
Date:	6 September 2016		
Action Officer:	Frank Marando	Phone:	x70367

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More firefighters - *the ACT is not funding or training enough firefighters. We need more firefighters to replace those retiring, maintain effective fire response times and manage an increasing workload of non-fire incidents.*

The ACT Government already employs a comparatively high proportion of firefighters compared to its population base. The ESA has over 330 paid firefighters, over 530 rural fire service volunteers, and 150 trained firefighters in Parks and Conservation Service, Environment and Planning Directorate.

The UFU's whole campaign lacks recognition of the role the ACT Rural Fire Service has in bushfire prevention, mitigation and response. The premise the UFU is attempting to draw is only paid firefighters can effectively protect Canberra is divisive and goes against the objects of the Emergencies Act and ESA's mission of working together.

While the ACT's population is steadily increasing, data also indicates that the demand for fire & rescue services is not. Despite this, the ACT Government has continued to increase funding to deal with emergency incidents. The proactive and preventative measures which are now commonplace, help to maintain very high safety levels for the community we protect and the reason why despite population growth risk has not risen.

The ESA has workforce plans to ensure that the right number of trained emergency response professionals are available in all of our emergency services. One of the proposed reforms, in relation to the ComCen is, in fact, likely to allow trained firefighters to return to their primary role to boost frontline numbers.

The ESA also has 16 new firefighters (4 female, 12 male) currently in training who are due to graduate in late October 2016. This latest intake has been successful in recruiting 25% women. A key focus of the Women in Emergency Services strategy is to ensure that at least 50% of places in future ACTF&R recruitment processes are obtained by women. The ESA has taken the lead nationally in committing to a minimum 50/50 recruitment of women, recognising the value of a more diverse and inclusive workforce.

The ESA is concerned by UFU claims that firefighters are suffering from fatigue. As a result, the ESA will consider the full range of contributory factors that may be affecting the fatigue levels of our staff. These include overtime, personal leave and sickness, returning staff to operational duties, and approvals for secondary employments of staff members.

Proper Equipment - *we do not have enough specialised vehicles for firefighting in tall buildings or managing HAZMAT incidents or those requiring breathing apparatus.*

The need for additional specialist resources is assessed on an ongoing basis. There are no reported occasions in which the ESA has not had enough specialised vehicles. The current demand is not increasing but the ESA continues to update, upgrade and improve its specialised vehicles. The ESA considers that it currently has enough specialised vehicles for firefighting in tall buildings, managing HAZMAT incidents, and those requiring breathing apparatus support.

The ACT has a Bronto aerial appliance to deal with emergency incidents in tall buildings. Access to more aerial ladder appliances would not guarantee the safety of the community. While the Bronto

is a key element of ACTF&R's operational capability, the high building standards in place in the ACT and residents' fire evacuation plans are equally important in ensuring community safety in the event of a fire in a multi-storey building. The ESA has also negotiated with the CSIRO to facilitate access for ESA staff to their Bronto aerial appliance vehicle during emergency situations.

ACTF&R has one dedicated HAZMAT appliance, and one breathing apparatus support vehicle. Both appliances are crewed 24 hours a day by dedicated staff, and there is nothing to suggest that additional appliances of this type are required at this point in time.

In addition there are additional specialist HAZMAT resources available in Platforms On Demand (PODs) and there is a breathing apparatus POD which can be used if required. It has not been deployed at an operational incident yet.

No part time stations - we cannot protect the new and growing suburbs around Chisholm and Molonglo with part time stations. Response times will suffer and lives will be put at risk. All Canberrans deserve the same level of protection.

The Government has made it clear that there is no plan to introduce part time stations.

A strong organisation - the Government must not remove firefighters from the emergency command centre or remove firefighter training, Community Resilience and Human Resources from the direction and control of firefighters. Changes like these will leave Fire and Rescue a much weaker organisation, less capable of protecting Canberra.

Firefighting knowledge will be required within the Emergency 000 Communications Centre (ComCen) and to undertake the Incident Management Functions including command and control of firefighting resources, as is current practice during major emergencies.

The community is best served by having more firefighters on the road. The ESA's current model has the same amount of staff regardless of the number of calls per hour. Data shows that at 7:00pm we receive three times more calls to fires than at 3:00am, but currently we maintain the same staffing model in the ComCen at both times. This is an area of improvement. We need more operators at the right time. We need to scale up better for major incidents. Currently, we need to take more firefighters away from their fire appliances to staff the ComCen. The new model puts them where the community needs them most. Consistent with the "all hazards, all services" approach our new ComCen will be staffed by professional emergency call takers to ensure the right advice is provided, the correct service is dispatched and to help us provide faster warnings to the community. We'll have a better system when we have large scale storm events to track and record those people that need assistance so that our crews can attend quicker.

Each of our services will contribute to combined communications, training, human resources, and community resilience, to make our emergency services stronger and more able to protect Canberra and the ACT.

ESA also intends to remove administrative and rostering duties from the ComCen so the firefighters in there can focus exclusively on applying their technical knowledge to incidents rather than filling vacant shifts.

A strong plan - ACT major bushfire plans are in disarray. The intended bushfire abatement zone, created after 2003 has been rolled back leaving the outer suburbs of Canberra exposed and vulnerable.

The campaign claims that ACT major bushfire plans are in disarray. This could not be further from the truth.

Bushfire management is the subject of the Strategic Bushfire Management Plan. Version 3 of the Strategic Bushfire Management Plan was tabled in the Legislative Assembly in September 2014. The five year plan clearly details the Government's priorities for bushfire prevention and suppression across 12 key objectives.

All of the services associated with bushfire management and suppression have had significant investment and increases in capability since 2003. This includes more than 600 rural firefighters, close to 1,000 CFU volunteers, and Remote Area Firefighting Teams (RAFT). In addition, there are new vehicles, aerial firefighting assets and facilities and land management arrangements.

The existing response arrangements outline that the first response to all grass and bush fires in the ACT will be by the nearest available most appropriate resource, irrespective of jurisdiction or Service. Both ACT fire services continue to work together collaboratively and cohesively in responding to fires across both the built up and rural areas of the ACT.

Ready for emerging threats - we are not ready for the increasing threats and challenges of terrorism, climate change, population growth and a rapid increase in non-fire rescue incidents such as rescues and car accidents.

Canberra is prepared for the threats by having four strong, well trained, equipped and funded emergency services. ACT Fire & Rescue, the ACT Rural Fire Service, the ACT State Emergency Service, and the ACT Ambulance Service all operate cohesively.

All parts of the ACT Government come together to assist in the preparation for emergencies by providing supporting functions that will assist in dealing with any current or emerging threat. Canberra is now one of the best protected communities in Australia. We have the lowest fire related injury and death rate as well as the lowest value of property losses. We have the best patient satisfaction scores and our patient transport personnel, paramedics, firefighters and volunteers are second to none. We are proud of those achievements but we are not complacent.

When reflecting on the hard lessons learnt about managing emergencies, particularly from the tragedy of the 2003 firestorm, it is important to resist re-establishing an unhealthy culture that would see our services uncoordinated, culturally isolated and with every potential to be as overwhelmed as they were in 2003.

The ESA plans to continue to improve and bring its services closer together. Each of the services will contribute to combined communications, training, HR and community resilience to make our emergency services stronger and more able to protect Canberra and the ACT.

A reformed ComCen would provide faster warnings to the community. It provides better systems for large scale storm events to track and record those people that need assistance so that crews can attend quicker. It would be staffed by professional emergency call takers to ensure the right advice is provided and correct service dispatched.

Should the worst happen the ACT is well positioned to bring the community together to combat the threat, manage the consequences of its impact, aid in emotional recovery and re-build the things that are valued.

The ESA plans to continue to improve and bring its services closer together. Each of the services will contribute to combined communications, training, HR and community resilience to make our emergency services stronger and more able to protect Canberra and the ACT.

The new Communications Centre will provide faster warnings to the community. It will give us a better system when we have large scale storm events to track and record those people that need assistance so that our crews can attend quicker. It will be staffed by professional emergency call takers to ensure the right advice is provided and correct service dispatched.

The ACT Government is supporting us to continue to improve by providing an extra \$32.6m:

- \$15.6m over 4 years in extra funding for frontline services.
- \$14.7m over 3 years to upgrade the territory radio network used by ESA and other services to communicate, particularly during emergencies.
- \$1.3m between 2015-16 to provide a new ambulance station at Greenway.
- \$971k to replace ESA's direct turnout system (notifies crews for request for assistance).

Should the worst happen the ACT is well positioned to bring the community together to combat the threat, manage the consequences of its impact, aid in emotional recovery and re-build the things that are valued.

Rutland, Kaylee

From: Jones, Mark
Sent: Wednesday, 7 September 2016 9:25 AM
To: Mavity, Matthew; Rutland, Kaylee
Subject: Rescue Data [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED]

Dear Matthew/ Kaylee, Good morning. Dom and I have exchanged this morning and he is twitchy about the UFU's claims in the press regarding the growth in rescues etc For some reason I cannot find the explanation produced by you Matthew.

As Kaylee can explain, we are now in firm rebuttal mode and can refute this nonsense.

Can we compare Matthews explanation and the UFU's claims against the data held by the government (Police) on road rescues by F&R? He will want to add it to the speech he will make at noon so time is pressing. He suggested contacting an Andrew MacIntosh in ACT gov for a quick set of stats.

Copy me in for completion but go back to Dom directly. Thanks very much, Mark

Rutland, Kaylee

From: Mavity, Matthew
Sent: Wednesday, 7 September 2016 10:51 AM
To: Jones, Mark
Cc: Lane, Dominic; Rutland, Kaylee
Subject: Rescue figures [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=Sensitive]
Attachments: 2002.doc; Road accident rescue figures.doc; annual report data.doc

Hi all,

I have reviewed ROGs data for 2002/2003 and 2014/2015 (the latest released figures).

The claim by the UFU is accurate when comparing two years of rescue data. There is a 31% increase when the two years are compared for non fire rescues.

In 2002/03 there were 1096 rescue incidents including road rescues. In 2014/15 there were 1440 incidents. Thus a 31 % increase between those years.

However, total incidents attended dropped from **9773** in 2002/03 to **9459** in 2014/15.

As such, overall demand dropped and we were less busy fighting fires and all other incidents combined giving ACTFR more time for rescues as it were.

The data when compared across the last five years shows some variability as I showed in a previous table. The data for that table was compiled from annual reports not ROGS data. It is attached for your reference, as is the ROGs data for the years the UFU selected.

Put simply, it is cherry picking data from reports in random years rather than a look at trends over recent years which would reflect contemporary conditions.

Finally, for both the years selected by the UFU to support their claim Automatic fire alarms accounted for 48.5% of calls (2002/03) and 60.5% of calls for 2014/15. I state this to demonstrate how variable figures can be when selecting random years to prove a point.

As a comparison rescues accounted for 11.2% in 2002/03 and 15.2% in 2014/15 as a percentage of all incidents attended so a 4% increase in work as a proportion of all incidents.

Overall demand fell by 314 incidents. That is the net drop in incidents overall. Rescues increased by 344 incidents for the year selected.

I hope all this helps and I haven't rambled too much.

I will continue to evaluate the crash data report.

Regards

Matthew

	2002/03		2014/15
Fires (total)	1543		854
Rescues incl RAR	1096		1440
Hazardous conditions	443		449
Storm/flood	699		800
Good intent calls	690		655
Malicious false alarms	242		48
Automatic fire alarms	4744		5731
Total calls	9773		9459

Table showing ROGS data from 2002/03 and 2014/15.

Road accident rescue figures.

Road accident rescue incidents of all types are recorded in the annual report as one figure.

This means that the severity of the accident is not recorded in the annual report and as such the role that ACTF&R undertook is not clarified. ACTFR may have conducted traffic control and swept up glass all the way to an extrication involving hydraulic tools.

This occurs because there are 2 stop codes that refer specifically to motor vehicle crashes. There used to be 3 relevant stop codes but one has been removed. The current codes are:

Code 351 (Vehicle accident with injuries and \or extrication of victim(s) from mobile property), and

Code 352 Mobile property crash (renamed from vehicle accident no injuries).

The figures reported in annual reports from 2010/11 to 2014/15 are:

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Road rescues	1095	1021	1147	1057	1129
Other rescues	89	75	146	141	170

As can be seen, there is a steady increase in other rescues (which includes animal rescue) and a bit of variability in motor vehicle incidents but it gravitates around an average of 1090 incidents per annum over the last 5 years.

In the ROGs report. Details in the 2016 report are not as clearly stated but non fire related rescues is the area which deals with road crash incidents.

The ACT has recorded around 400 rescues a year in road crash rescue. The figure is imprecise due to the lack of detail in the graphs. This seems to indicate that of the roughly 1100 calls per annum to road crash incidents around 36% involve a rescue or extrication.

This means that the ACT is recording approximately the same number of rescues as QLD and South Australia who have far larger populations.

The recording codes are not reflective of the actual role of fire services at these incidents and should probably be changed to vehicle accident with injuries but no extrication and then vehicle accident with extrication to separate the two types of activities.

As a side note, there is no organisational guidance to Station Officers on the selection of stop codes. This results in variability due to personal subjectivity.

The SES and RFS have distilled the types of stop codes they are likely to need to limit the selection offered for each type of incident.

	03/04	04/05	05/06	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15
Other Fires				786	506		516	251	254	246	207	205
Structure fires				315	281		285	270	296	277	268	271
Bush and grass fires				473	237		268	142	199	290	210	193
Car fires							331	237	221	195	175	185
Total fires		1053		1574	1024		1400	900	970	1008	860	854
Road accident rescues		806		908	975		1105	1095	1021	1147	1057	1129
Extrications				478								
Other rescues		467		111	74		128	89	75	146	141	170
Total rescues		1273		1497	1049		1233	1184	1096	1293	1198	1299
Hazardous chemical spills		216		229	431		218	473	408	415	315	449
Fire alarms		4550		5235	5768		5721	6465	6280	5892	5725	5731
Medical incidents				222	266		295	313	276	160	155	162
Storm damage				907	151		1062	1467	1203	955	868	167
Other		2407		1495	1723		1201	1112	1142	1021	1021	1659
Total Incidents		9499		10681	10412		11130	11914	11375	10744	10178	10321

Rutland, Kaylee

From: Rutland, Kaylee
Sent: Friday, 16 September 2016 3:05 PM
To: Lane, Dominic
Cc: Mavity, Matthew; MarandoESA, Frank; Jones, Mark
Subject: FW: Myth Busting - UFU Claims (2) [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Importance: High

Hi Dom,

Reviewed copy for your approval please. Please find the previous copy in the email below.

The UFU have claimed that non fire response has risen 22% and then at a later date they claim it has risen 31%. The disparity between these figures is confusing.

The ESA analyses data for trends and does not select years at random to compare data. The ESA considers it important to compare current and relevant data when making decisions on staffing and resources, and despite a decrease in demand the ESA continues to increase the ACTF&R budget. Expenditure on ACTF&R service has increased by \$11,597,000 (32%) since 2010/11.

In responding to inaccurate UFU claims about data between 2002/03 and 2014/15 the following is factual:

- When the time to take the triple zero (000) call is removed, ACTF&R are the fastest service in Australia.
- The ACT has had the second lowest number of structure fires in Australia.
- The ACT has the second highest rate of confining fires to the room of origin.
- All types of fires decreased from 1543 in 2002/2003 to 854 in 2014/15.
- Incidents overall increased from 9773 in 2002/03 to 10313 in 2014/15. This is a 5.5% increase in total incidents over 12 years or less than 0.5% increase per year.
- Comparing data over the last 5 years shows that demand has decreased from a peak in 2010/11 of 11914 ACTF&R incidents to 10321 incidents in 2014/15. It is important to note that the increase in rescues quoted by the UFU amounts to a change from 11% to 14% as a proportion of all incidents per year.
- Whilst demand for ACTF&R has increased slightly since 2003, the biggest single increase in incidents is in false alarms which make up over 50% of all incidents attended.

Regards,

Kaylee Rutland
 Internal Communications Manager
 Strategic Reform Agenda Program

Phone: (02) 6205 6746



ACT
 Government



ACT Emergency Services Agency

The ACT Emergency Services Agency (ESA) is the ACT Government organisation charged with providing emergency management services to the Canberra community.

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From: Lane, Dominic
Sent: Friday, 16 September 2016 12:31 PM
To: Rutland, Kaylee
Cc: Jones, Mark; Mavity, Matthew; MarandoESA, Frank
Subject: Re: Myth Busting - UFU Claims (2) [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]

Thanks to everyone for this. I think it is very good, I am just wondering if the second part put 'expenditure on F&r has increased by \$xx since xx (as per the figures I read out at the staff meeting on 28 June.) and then instead of discussing the smoke alarm data, focus on response time and room confinement are consistent/better.

Regards

Dom

Sent from my iPad

On 16 Sep 2016, at 12:19 PM, Rutland, Kaylee <Kaylee.Rutland@act.gov.au> wrote:

Hi Dom,

Matt did another a review of figures used in the UFU Myth Busting claims this morning. There have been some required changes to the figures. He is now 100% certain the information is accurate. Could you please approve the following paragraph to replace the red highlighted paragraph below.

I am ready to publish all information one this is approved.

New copy:

The UFU have claimed that non fire response has risen 22% and then at a later date they claim it has risen 31%. The disparity between these figures is confusing.

The ESA analyses data for trends and does not select years at random to compare data. However, in responding to inaccurate UFU claims for data between 2002/03 and 2014/15 the following is true; all types of fires decreased from 1543 in 2002/2003 to 854 in 2014/15.

Incidents overall increased from 9773 in 2002/03 to 10313 in 2014/15. This is a 5.5% increase in total incidents over 12 years or less than 0.5% increase per year. Comparing data over the last 5 years shows that demand has decreased from a peak in 2010/11 of 11914 ACTF&R incidents to 10321 incidents in 2014/15. ESA considers it important to compare current, relevant data when making decisions on staffing and resources. Despite this decrease in demand, the ESA continues to increase the ACTF&R budget. Expenditure on fire and rescue service has increased by \$xx since xx

It is important to note that the increase in rescues quoted by the UFU amounts to a change from 11% to 14% as a proportion of all incidents per year. In the same period Automatic Fire Alarms increased from 4744 calls to 5731 calls which represents an increase from 48.5% of all calls in 2002/03 to 55.5% of all calls in 2014/15. Whist demand for ACTF&R has increased slightly since 2003, the biggest single increase in incidents is in false alarms which make up over 50% of all incidents attended.

According to the Report On Government Services 2016 (ROGS) the ACT has the second fastest response times in Australia after Victoria. When the time to take the 000 call is removed, ACTF&R are the fastest service in Australia. The ACT has the second lowest number of structure fires in Australia for the last 10 years after the Northern Territory. The ACT has the second highest rate of confining fires to the room of origin.

Old copy:

The UFU have claimed on that non-fire related response has risen 22% and then at a later date they claim it has risen 31%. The disparity between these figures is confusing. However, the data reported to Government by ACT Fire & Rescue indicates that the claim by the UFU that non-fire related emergencies have increased by 31% since 2002-03 is accurate when comparing two years of rescue data. There is a 31% increase when the two years are compared for non-fire rescues. In 2002/03, there were 1,096 rescue incidents including road rescues. In 2014/15, there were 1,440 incidents. Thus a 31 % increase between those years. However, according to the data provided by ACT Fire & Rescue to Government, the total incidents attended dropped from **9,773** in 2002/03 to **9,459** (a 3.2% drop) in 2014/15. As such, overall demand dropped, indicating we were less busy fighting fires and all other incidents combined giving ACT Fire & Rescue more time for responding to increasing rescues. Rescues increased by 344 incidents for the year selected. Overall demand has decreased by 314 incidents. That is the net drop in incidents overall.

Regards,

Kaylee Rutland
Internal Communications Manager
Strategic Reform Agenda Program

Phone: (02) 6205 6746

ACT Emergency Services Agency

<image001.png>

The ACT Emergency Services Agency (ESA) is the ACT Government organisation charged with providing emergency management services to the Canberra community.

[Read more...](#)

Rutland, Kaylee

From: Everett, Kaylene on behalf of Lane, Dominic
Sent: Monday, 19 September 2016 4:42 PM
To: ##All Staff ACT Emergency Services Agency
Subject: GET THE FACTS: Building a Stronger ESA [SEC=UNCLASSIFIED, DLM=For-Official-Use-Only]



GET THE FACTS:

BUILDING A STRONGER ESA THROUGH STRATEGIC REFORM

Cohesive Operations. Collaborative
Management Team. Unified Executive

The Emergency Services Agency (ESA) is committed to ensuring the ACT continues to be one of the safest communities in the world to live.

The Emergency Services Agency (ESA) is committed to ensuring the ACT continues to be one of the safest communities in the world to live.

Our job, our reason for existing, is the protection of life, property and the environment. Canberrans should be proud of our emergency services and the role we play in protecting the community and in ensuring our community is one the safest in Australia and the world.

While we have achieved a lot, the ESA is committed to building an even stronger organisation and, we must continually learn and evolve if we are to deliver a modernised, integrated and coordinated ESA.

The Strategic Reform Agenda (SRA) aims to ensure cohesive operations across the ACT Fire & Rescue, the ACT Rural Fire Service, the ACT State Emergency Service, and the ACT Ambulance Service. This is supported by a collaborative management team and a unified executive.

Our Strategic Bushfire Management Plan focuses our attention not only on our response to bushfires, but also on preventing bushfires, mitigating their impact, coordinating across government during emergencies, and focussing on recovery. This plan allows us to bring the community together to combat the threat, manage the consequences of its impact, aid in emotional recovery, and re-build the things that are value.

Successive Governments have committed to support emergency services by increasing funding to ensure we

are best placed to deal with emergency incidents. The ESA remains confident that the continued provision of evidence-based information will allow future investment and decision making to meet our future increased demand and risk.

However, claims by the United Firefighters Union (UFU) that the ACT is not funding enough firefighters, that there are not enough specialised vehicles, and that part time stations are being introduced, are simply untrue. And to counter some of the UFU's other claims; the ESA is a strong organisation, with a strong plan, and is preparing for emerging threats.

This strength is underpinned by our mission of working together. Through this mission we are well on our way to building an even safer community.

IMPORTANT LINKS



Delivering strong emergency services for Canberra



A plan to protect Canberra



From the Commissioner



Commissioner's Speech – Belconnen Ambulance and Fire & Rescue Station Opening



Myth busting – UFU Claims

ACT Emergency Services Agency

Phone: 13 22 81

Fax: (02) 6207 8447

Email: esahaveyoursay@act.gov.au

The ACT Emergency Services Agency (ESA) operates under the Emergencies ACT, 2004.

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