

DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES — VOLUNTEERS — CODE OF CONDUCT

**755. Mr D.T. REDMAN to the Minister for Emergency Services:**

I refer to the funding agreement between the Department of Fire and Emergency Services and the Association of Volunteer Bushfire Brigades of Western Australia, which was renewed on 1 July this year, subject to a new requirement that the association establish a DFES-endorsed code of conduct. Will DFES endorse a code of conduct if it does not include a gag order that prevents volunteers from speaking to politicians and the media about bullying, safety or funding concerns?

**Mr F.M. LOGAN replied:**

Thanks for that question. The information that the member has been getting has either been misconstrued from what he heard, or he is misleading Parliament. There was no tying of any requirement to do anything via the funding of those associations related to the code of conduct. As the member would well know, because I have told him numerous times in this house, that code of conduct applies to only those organisations that are directly under the control of the Commissioner for Fire and Emergency Services. The member has just quoted the Association of Volunteer Bushfire Brigades of Western Australia. It is not covered by that code of conduct. It is covered by codes of conduct that are separately held by each local government in Western Australia, including the member's own in Denmark. It has to comply with those codes of conduct.

Provisions in local government codes of conduct are similar to those in the state government code of conduct. The member has put a proposition to the house that has misled the house—that is, that the money to the Association of Volunteer Bushfire Brigades of Western Australia is directly related to the code of conduct, but the code of conduct does not apply to it. The member has got it wrong because he is listening too much to Darren Brown, friend of the Liberal Party.

**Mr D.T. Redman** interjected.

**Mr F.M. LOGAN:** The member can laugh, but that is who he is listening to. He is listening to Darren Brown.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members!

**Mr F.M. LOGAN:** I would speak to Legislative Council member Hon Peter Collier about Darren Brown to hear what he thinks about Darren Brown and what he would believe from him. It seems to me that the member for Warren–Blackwood believes whatever he is told by Mr Brown. If what he has been told relates to what he has just told Parliament, it is not only wrong, but also misleading.