



SUPPLEMENTARY EVIDENCE - 09 NOVEMBER 2005

FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES AUTHORITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Preamble

The Fire and Emergency Services Authority (FESA) of Western Australia submitted supplementary evidence to the Committee's hearing with the Authority, held on Wednesday 09 November 2005. On 24 November 2005, the Committee resolved to make public an aspect of that evidence related to the "power to approve and cancel the approval of Bushfire Brigades"¹. This is as follows:

FESA Recommendation 5 – Power to approve and cancel the approval of Bushfire Brigades

Since submitting FESA's Recommendations to the Committee, FESA has revisited the question of whether FESA requires the power to cancel the approval of Bushfire Brigades. Subsequent consultation with key stakeholders has made it apparent that some may view this power as unnecessarily usurping the autonomy of local governments and, consequently, FESA wishes to withdraw the "power to cancel the approval of Bushfire Brigades" component of Recommendation 5.

However, FESA would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm that, since the introduction of the Emergency Services Levy (ESL), it is FESA's belief that FESA does need to be involved in the approval process for establishing new bushfire brigades. The establishment of new brigades clearly has significant resourcing implications in terms of both operating and capital costs; as these costs will be borne principally by the ESL.

The creation of any additional brigades will obviously impact upon the finite level of available funding, for which FESA is responsible for administering. It is, therefore, both logical and critical that FESA has a primary role in determining the relative operational needs and benefits of establishing new bushfire brigades.

It is still FESA's recommendation, however, that where a local government disagrees with a decision made by FESA, it may appeal that decision to the State Administrative Tribunal in an attempt to have the decision reversed.

¹ Relates to recommendation 5, Submission, Fire and Emergency Services Authority of Western Australia, p.13.