



Australasian Fire and Emergency
Service Authorities Council

Transforming an Occupation into a Profession

Professionalisation of Fire and Emergency Management Work: Preliminary Consultation

This report is currently under strategic consideration by AFAC member agencies. A decision on whether to proceed on further development of this concept will be scheduled for discussion at the April 2012 AFAC Council meeting.

**Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council
(AFAC)**

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Who is AFAC?

The Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC) is the industry body representing public sector fire and rescue, land and emergency management organisations in Australia and New Zealand.

AFAC was established by its members in 1993 to collaborate on matters of international, national and regional importance. The organisation fosters and promotes relationships between members and partners in the broader context of emergency management. It facilitates sharing of knowledge, experience and capability in the interests of improving community safety outcomes.

Its Vision is “*Fire and emergency services strengthened through sharing, collaboration and innovation*” which is at the core of why AFAC undertook to explore the concept of professionalisation.

Acknowledgments

AFAC wishes to thank the thousands of dedicated personnel who are devoted to the protection of life and property across Australasia. Nearly 600 of these dedicated staff and volunteers have taken the time and opportunity to express their views and opinions on the concept of introducing a Professionalisation Scheme for fire and emergency management work. Thank you for undertaking the survey and/or participating in the focus groups.

We are grateful for the honest and direct views expressed as they have provided a critical insight into the issues that need to be taken into account and the opportunities that exist to support people in their roles.

The AFAC office is particularly thankful to those agency staff who managed to find time in their busy schedules to help organise the conduct of twenty-two (22) focus groups across every Australian State and Territory and within New Zealand.

AFAC wishes to acknowledge also the contribution from Ms Doris Pozzi of Dorian Welles Market Research in providing independent, expert advice on the construction of the consultation methodology and the analysis of the results of the on-line survey.

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Executive Summary

Outlined below is a high level account of the results of a consultation process involving nearly 600 fire and emergency management personnel from across AFAC member agencies. This summary synthesises the views expressed through an on-line survey, 22 focus groups and a small number of written submissions. The full details of the survey results are included in Appendix 1.

In reviewing the results it is important to note that given the small sample size from volunteer personnel the contribution whilst valuable and insightful is not statistically valid. Additionally, the nature of the consultation process was such that it elicited a range of comment and discussion that went beyond the scope of this topic.

The information gathered is rich and insightful and provides depth and detail to findings summarised in this paper. The detailed information is available to all AFAC member agencies for their strategic considerations.

Purpose of Preliminary Consultation

AFAC embarked on a preliminary consultation process with an imprimatur from the AFAC Council given at its meeting in April 2011. The purpose of the consultation was to test the hypothesis that there is a need for a Professionalisation Scheme for fire and emergency management work and people would be willing to engage in such a Scheme.

The hypothesis was formulated from the findings of early and initial research into this topic. From this research it became evident that this is a far reaching, long term strategic concept that warranted careful consideration and broader stakeholder input before an informed decision could be made by Council. It was determined that this is a decision not to be taken lightly and it was important there was a far better understanding of the impact, possible benefits, risks and costs of this proposal.

Preliminary consultation with the people who would be most impacted was identified as the first important step to take. Consequently an invitation was extended to all AFAC member agencies to participate in a preliminary consultation exercise involving volunteers and staff as deemed appropriate. The results of this consultation would be analysed and key findings reported back to Council at its meeting on 29 August 2011. Any decision to proceed would therefore be informed by the results of the consultation.

The public and the broader emergency management industry were not officially engaged with as part of this preliminary consultation process.

Consultation Methods

Given the nature of this topic it was determined that the consultation process was not about *selling* anything other than the opportunity for people to engage in a strategic discussion about formal recognition of fire and emergency management work into the future.

In support of the above ideal, participating agencies were afforded a choice in terms of what consultation methods would be appropriate to use for their organisations (sensitive to the fact this impacted on agency priorities). The choices included:

- Encouraging and promoting the opportunity within their organisations to complete an on-line survey established specifically for this project
- Conduct of focus groups, engaging with small groups of volunteers and staff in a deeper conversation about this topic (which would assist with validating the opinions expressed in the survey), and
- Preparing a written submission

Nineteen of the 35 AFAC member agencies were able to support the consultation process, albeit to varying degrees given other priorities and imperatives that had priority attention. A table summarising the participation in this preliminary consultation is included as Appendix 2 - Annex B.

In addition to the above agency consultation, meetings were held with key stakeholders as well as briefings with a small number of AFAC groups.

To ensure that the methodology being followed was appropriate and would provide evidence to support the hypothesis being tested, an independent expert was engaged to advise on and review the questions being asked and the approach being taken.

Full details of the consultation methodology are provided as Appendix 2.

Observation

It was a surprise to some people that they were being asked to express a view about a concept as opposed to critiquing a proposal. This meant that it took a little time for some people to accept that there was no pre-determined outcome or hidden agenda and that this was a genuine attempt to obtain views and opinions and help shape the problem and identify opportunities.

Where did this idea come from – testing the premise?

Background information and explanations were provided on the AFAC Knowledge Web and opening remarks made at all focus group sessions on the discussions that had taken place on the concept of a Professionalisation Scheme for the industry and the reasons why this proposal is being explored.

The key reasons identified for exploring this concept were explained as:

- The work associated with AFAC into the Future strategic considerations; ensuring the organisation adds value for its members (a broader project which is examining the future role of AFAC within its changing environment)

- Changing community and political expectations and the impact on the fire and emergency management industry; increasing complexity and accountability
- Looking at the relevance of the industry into the future in light of recent Royal Commissions, Inquiries and other Reviews; lessons learnt and continual improvement
- Having some influence and control over the requirements for emergency management capability into the future; self-regulation for the industry by the industry; influencing and supporting public policy development
- Attracting, retaining and developing future leaders; volunteers and paid staff
- Attain an applicable status for practitioners as professionals; formally recognising the expertise within the industry
- Address (in part) the risk of insufficient personnel available to fulfil roles into the future; incentives for young people to participate and others to advance
- Support increased mobility of practitioners intra and inter-jurisdictions; interoperability
- Recognise expertise through formal certification of competency, skill, knowledge and experience
- Establish an education pathway; specifying what the industry requires
- Establish a systematic arrangement to ensure continual professional development is available to and recognised for practitioners; formalise current practice and encourage pursuit of the most up to date industry knowledge
- Contribute to the growth of a pool of highly skilled, expert emergency management practitioners

It was further explained that the preliminary consultation process was to hear the views of those involved in fire and emergency management work and validate the perception of the drivers that led to this consultation as well as attain a deeper understanding of how they feel about it.

Validating the premise

A small number of survey respondents and focus group discussions questioned the premise of undertaking this project and suggested that *“the objectives of the consultation were incorrect, or can (or have been) achieved in other ways”* or *“this is a solution looking for a problem”*. In addition, a few people expressed a view that *“there is no problem, fire and emergency services are already professional.”*

Importantly, and both through the survey and the focus groups a common view was expressed about the need to attract volunteers to remote rural areas and the provision of and access to training and development of *‘basic’* or *‘tactical’* level skills; the problem being *“there is not enough resources to go around”*.

People expressing these views did not consider whether a Professionalisation Scheme could play a role in addressing the issues, with one suggesting instead *“sorry for the rant, the lack of personnel is a subject I’m more interested in than Professionalisation Schemes. Somebody needs to get off their khyber and do something about attracting membership in remote rural areas...as I said before, talk about dream world.”*

On the other hand, by far the majority of views expressed both within the survey and through the focus groups confirmed and reinforced the premise upon which this consultation was based and revealed there are a number of additional drivers that need to be taken into account:

- The changing nature of the business of land, fire and emergency management; driven by more regular and intense natural disasters; increased role of government and business collapse in the case of forestry.

- Growing complexity; the need to provide broader emergency management services and increased demand impacting on developing the skills of front line firefighters and emergency workers – maybe we are asking too much of them?
- A growing perception by others (in the broader emergency management industry) that fire and emergency management standards and competencies are dropping; other industries have resources to invest in developing their people in emergency management roles, require higher levels of competency and hold them to account.

What do people think is meant by Professionalisation?

An initial explanation of what is meant by Professionalisation was established to support the discussion and provide context for exploring this concept with people. For the purposes of this preliminary consultation, Professionalisation was considered to represent:

Professionalisation is a *process* which *transforms* a trade/occupation into a profession; and a requirement for accepted standards of education, practice and behaviour.

Most established professions including medicine, law, accounting, for example, have generally followed a pattern of transformational stages, including:

1. Creation of full time work in the discipline over life-long careers
2. Developed work standards; identified a body of knowledge and established educational programs in institutions of higher learning
3. Organised themselves into effective Associations for the advancement of the profession
4. Worked toward legal protection in the form of licensing and certification
5. Adopted a formal code of ethics for the discipline

Consistent with this definition, a Professionalisation Scheme was therefore said to encompass a number of elements, interrelated but all important to the evolution of a trade/occupation into a profession. From early research into other Professionalisation Schemes a number of common elements emerged mostly revolving around four primary areas:

1. Accreditation – the formal evaluation of an individual against certain standards (education, practical experience and code of conduct/ethics)
2. Certification – endorsed authoritatively by peers/experts in the field; confirming status and awarding credentials (credentials usually represented by post-nominals)
3. Verification – periodic inspection and audit to ensure that the Scheme is quality assured, credible and any performance and non-compliance deficits are addressed
4. Continual Professional Development (CPD) – to encourage currency of knowledge and its application (usually accumulated in the form of ‘points’ accumulated from approved CPD activities)

Finally, Professionalisation Schemes are usually administered by an Association or Institute, formed by the members of that profession; a form of self-regulation (for example CPA; Certified Practising Accountants). In other circumstances Governments have established appropriate Authorities to independently regulate the profession (for example AHPRA; Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Authority).

These administration bodies:

- **Accredit** their members and require high standards of personal conduct. They require specified standards of education and training and experience, all of which combine to enable a person to be certified as a professional in their field. It is also possible for a person to lose their accreditation should they demonstrate unprofessional behaviour or fail to maintain their skills;
- **Validate** their members. Professionals are able to point to their status as proof of their skill and experience. Professional qualifications are portable between employers. They are also an assurance for the general public: the public can have trust that the professional is independently recognised as having skills and experience in their field and has been assessed against benchmarks.

It is important to note that whilst AFAC has led the discussion on this concept, no suggestion has been made that AFAC would administer any Scheme.

Central to the understanding of Professionalisation is what is meant by '*profession*'. For the purposes of discussion the following ACCC (Australian Competition and Consumer Commission) definition was used:

A profession is: 'A disciplined group of individuals who adhere to high ethical standards and uphold themselves to, and are accepted by, the public as possessing special knowledge and skills in a widely recognised, organised body of learning derived from education and training at a high level, and who are prepared to exercise this knowledge and these skills in the interest of others.

Inherent in this definition is the concept that the responsibility for the welfare, health and safety of the community shall take precedence over other considerations.'

Put another way what constitutes a *profession* could be explained as:

1. Service implies a sense of calling to the discipline; a sense of mission and a responsibility to the public.
2. Knowledge implies specialised education, including both theoretical knowledge and techniques or skills.
3. Practice autonomy implies having control over one's own practice. It also implies a code of ethics governing standards of conduct within the profession.
4. Belief in self-regulation; professionals are best qualified to judge the work of others within the profession

Observations

A high number of respondents had a good grasp of what is meant by Professionalisation, however, there were similarly a high number of respondents that thought that what was being talked about was only to do with qualifications: "*What's wrong with the current qualifications framework system as most already see it as professional*".

An additional comment that sums up quite a number of views is "*currently qualifications are recognised through educational institutions, not sure why we need to then have it certified.*"

A few people suggested their agency had a high quality and strong qualifications model already in place: "*can't see anything in it for [us]; we already have a comprehensive qualification model. We have worked hard to have the best in the business.*"

Terminology was a common factor in different understanding, particularly the use of the words 'accredited' and 'certification' as both are currently used in the awarding of qualifications by Registered Training Organisations (RTO's). A lot of people therefore perceived the Scheme would result in *"another bit of paper"* that would not add value to emergency workers or the community.

Another common perception expressed was that being a *professional* meant being paid not a volunteer: *"to me a professional is someone who earns a living doing something"*. This perception led to people expressing fears about creating a greater divide than was believed to exist between volunteers and staff (see 'what people fear' section below).

The word and this perception came up consistently in the survey and the focus groups. Most people, volunteers and paid staff, saw themselves already as *professional* and reflected that the community consistently rate them highly when compared to other 'professions'. Most people believed that being *professional* is about attitude and behaviour of an individual.

Those that had a good understanding of Professionalisation reflected on the lack of a Code of Conduct/Ethics for the industry. Whilst acknowledging individual agencies had various forms of values statements or Charters, from an industry perspective the following statement reflects the opinions expressed: *"Doctors have an oath that they swear to, where is ours as a profession? We talk about the brotherhood of firefighting globally but where is the oath?"*

The word 'occupation' resonated both negatively and positively. Quite a number of volunteers did not identify with it and in a couple of cases resented it on the basis that, like the word 'profession', it was linked to being paid: *"the vast majority of practitioners in the country are volunteers; it is not their occupation."*

The Changing Nature of Fire and Emergency Management Work

The end result of any Professionalisation Scheme is the certification of practitioners in their 'field'. The key question is certification in the field of what? There were a surprising number of people that suggested firefighting was a 'trade' given people *'learn on the job'* and likened the arrangements to that of apprentices in other trades.

The vast majority of views expressed would appear to indicate there is uncertainty about the 'field' in which land, fire and emergency management personnel operate, not unsurprising given the changing nature of the environment in which they work.

There was considerable discussion at focus groups involving land management agencies about the pressures they are experiencing to balance dual responsibilities of land management and emergency management:

- *"prevention and fuel management is taking up a lot of our time"*
- *"focus is fire prevention now"*
- *"Prescribed burning is at the top of the list"*

Similarly the discussion with fire and emergency management personnel also expressed a view that *"our role is evolving; emergency services, public safety and emergency management. The business we are in is changing. The core of what we do is risk management and emergency management."*

In the context of the changing nature of the role, was the consideration of the level of education and qualifications required to perform them. Using terms such as ‘tactical’, ‘supervisor’, ‘strategic’ there was a view that skill sets should reflect the various levels and certification could be aligned to them. In relation to the tactical level, however, there was strong pushback from volunteers on the training required for remote, rural communities *“they need access to and attainment of base level tactical skills to perform their roles; they don’t need the higher education.”*

It is appropriate to note that whilst the consultation began with expressing the industry in terms of ‘fire and emergency services’, the process has led to settling on ‘fire and emergency management’ as the best and most commonly used term.

Is there a need for Fire and Emergency Management work to be professionalised - what is the problem?

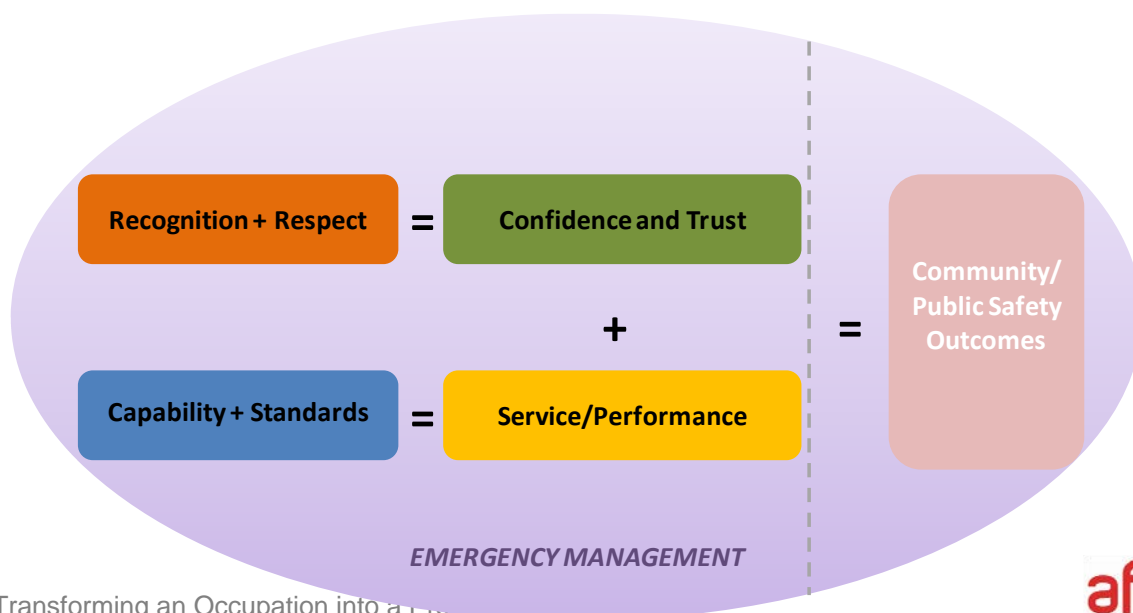
The preliminary consultation set out to establish whether there is a need for a Professionalisation Scheme for our industry. In pursuing that line of enquiry a common response was: *‘what problem are we trying to solve with a Professionalisation Scheme?’*

The information gathered from nearly 600 people provides an opportunity to discern both the problem and the need according to their views and in part provides an insight into whether they believe Professionalisation is part of the answer.

As the results of the survey indicate (validated through the focus groups) there is broad support among both staff and volunteers for a fire and emergency services Professionalisation Scheme. The majority (82%) thought fire and emergency service work should be a recognised and certified profession.

From the significant amount of information gathered during the consultation the results have revealed considerable need and a growing problem in the sector which has been further validated through the focus group discussions.

The following diagram along with explanations of each component has been prepared to assist understand what the problem is:



The concept incorporates three perspectives; all are intrinsically linked and aligned to an ultimate goal of improving Community/Public Safety Outcomes:

- Individual (fire and rescue, land and emergency management workers)
- Fire and rescue, land and emergency management organisations
- Industry (Fire and Emergency Management)

Community/Public Safety Outcomes

Throughout the consultation strong views were expressed about providing the community with high quality, credible and competent advice and services – **delivering the best possible service to the community**.

There is no question that those involved in the industry strive for better public safety outcomes and wish to be the best they can be to serve their communities. It is evident from responses however that there are limitations as to how far the volunteer workforce is able to extend their time and resources.

It was clear that according to respondents' views any move to a Professionalisation Scheme must be underpinned by adding value to community safety:

- *“the focus should be on delivering better public safety outcome”*
- *“a driver should be improved public safety”*

Recognition

The strongest message conveyed by both staff and volunteers was to give much needed **recognition** for their knowledge, skills and experience as well as the role they perform in emergency management and delivering public safety outcomes.

Some people suggested there already were recognition arrangements in place through awards, honours and qualifications for example. Most however, viewed recognition in a different context, primarily more than receiving long service or longevity awards (albeit important), rather they want recognition to be meaningful and tangible and representative of the skills and experience needed to do the job.

Recognition was observed to include:

- Recognition by peers: *“maybe it could unite us, at the end of the day we are all here for the same purpose”*
- Recognition within their own agencies and by peer organisations: *“recognised qualifications nationally/internationally”*
- Recognition by the community: *“increased trust and recognition of the standards required in saving life and responding to a range of emergency incidents. The community want to be able to trust emergency workers as much as they trust any other person who holds their life in their hands”*

Respect

Another strong (but not surprising) theme that emerged from the consultation was the sensitivities between volunteers and paid staff. A common thread throughout this theme however was the

desire for both parts of the workforce to be **respected** for what they do and the contribution they make. A lack of shared understanding of the key terms used to describe the work the industry does and how it goes about it contributes to the sensitivities. Both paid staff and volunteers expressed discomfort at the unintended consequences of the use of the term professional. As mentioned earlier the perception of professional was seen to be related to being paid: *“Just because you don’t get paid doesn’t mean you’re not a professional.”* Professionalisation could go part way to overcoming this perception.

A high number of respondents also suggested professionalisation could assist with attaining respect from other professions, government departments, other NGOs, other industries and related industries. To illustrate this point, during one focus group a participant recounted a conversation they had with a government employee about the role the fire service played in managing a major disaster. That government employee said: *“I had no idea that’s what the fire service does; I just thought you went out in the trucks and put water on fires.”*

Confidence and Trust

Consistent with the comments regarding recognition and respect was the need to increase public confidence and trust in fire and emergency management agencies. Increased public recognition and respect for the skills, experience and training of emergency workers could add credibility to the perception about the industry: *“Communities could be assured they receive services that are delivered by competent people who hold not only qualifications and skills but also a commitment to certain standards (including ethical ones). The community should not accept lower standards because people in this industry are given hero status.”*

The awarding of credentials; formally certifying an individual’s skills, experience and expertise was seen by a high number of people to offer an increased sense of security and confidence, particularly for those whose background is legally challenged in a court of law or questioned during intense scrutiny and/or inquiry:

- *“Trust is fundamental; it comes from competence and character. To build trust, you have to work on the competency side of things, not just rely on someone’s character.”*
- *“it would add some sort of weight to skills and experience if questioned in a court of law”*
- *“you are more competent when you are more confident”*

Transportability of skills and qualifications intra and inter-jurisdictions was a consistent and strongly expressed view primarily by staff but also by volunteers, with most people highly critical of and frustrated by the current system.

There was a high degree of mistrust expressed about the awarding of qualifications: *“not only do people need confidence in the qualification someone has, but confidence in the people who accredited the qualification.”* From the views expressed this mistrust and subsequent scepticism stems from different standards applied by some RTOs.

Capability

Amongst the drivers for considering a Professionalisation Scheme was the risk of insufficient personnel, the difficulty in attracting volunteers to the industry and fewer numbers aspiring to leadership roles. As well as validating these drivers, respondents confirmed there is a need to build capability whereby volunteers and staff are all properly trained to a standard and have the right attitude to deliver the best possible service to every community at all times.

It was commonly felt that having a clearly identified career and education pathway (volunteer and staff) could encourage greater participation in the industry, attracting and retaining talent and rewarding their contribution through better education, proficiency and transportability. It was felt

that raising the bar in relation to skills and knowledge, whilst a risk at some levels, would also lead to *“we will become better at our jobs.”*

It was felt that any opportunity to increase capability was not without risk. For some jurisdictions this risk is the possibility of losing quality people to other industries: *“a flexible dynamic scheme would grow me and my career probably beyond fire service thus defeating the aim.”*

The survey results would indicate that younger people are more inclined to support a Professionalisation Scheme than those in the older brackets. Whilst this is not unsurprising (the older group suggesting they are nearing the end of their careers) it is noteworthy to think that young people may be attracted by the concept of Professionalisation.

The following comment was made by a young volunteer, however it is also consistent with views expressed by some younger staff members as well: *“Leadership training courses are hard to get in to, they put people who are already in those kinds of roles into the courses, not people like me who have just started in the organisation. I would like to start those kinds of courses now so that in 6-10 years time when I want to apply for those roles I have the courses already complete. Instead of when applying them telling me I now have to go and complete them.”*

People are looking for opportunity, support and protection in their roles. They desire to learn, know how to prepare themselves for a career in emergency management and have their skills and competencies recognised: *“this should portray to the community that volunteer ESO’s aren’t just weekend warriors, rather an unpaid professional group of emergency organisations.”*

Commitment to Standards

The hallmark of any Professionalisation Scheme is the establishment of the standards against which individuals would be accredited. These standards include training and qualifications; practical experience, code of conduct/ethics and CPD.

The highest level of agreement reached by respondents in relation to potential benefits of Professionalisation was the notion that there will be an accepted standard for consistent education, training, experience and behaviour (86%): *“our industry needs to come together and look at national consistency moving forward”*. A commonly expressed view however, was that they did not believe that the industry could actually reach agreement nor stick to it. This perception was seen to be a significant barrier to the success, credibility and effectiveness of any Scheme.

Inherent within the standards was the expectation that people would develop a deeper and wider understanding of all the elements that make a safer community and provide greater authority when engaging with government and others to influence positive community outcomes.

Additionally, through the adherence to standards the concept of interchangeable and transportable credentials could become a reality, providing increased opportunity and pathways for both volunteers and staff in their education and career aspirations. Importantly, this view was tempered by the need for volunteers to work in the industry without feeling overburdened by unrealistic expectations of time and effort commitments.

Improved Services and Performance

Underlying all of the perceived need is one important factor – **delivering the best possible service to the community.**

Respondents consistently commented about achieving high standards and improved quality of service delivery which would result in increased public confidence, trust and accountability.

Through increased transparency and recognition of the skills, qualifications and expertise possessed by those making critical emergency management decisions and providing advice, the public would be reassured: *“Professionalisation would guarantee peace of mind to communities enduring fires and emergencies that the best qualified people are doing their job.”*

Is Professionalisation the answer?

As mentioned earlier there were some people who suggested that this initiative was a solution looking for a problem, others were not convinced there was a need or there were enough drivers to warrant going down this path. These views whilst acknowledged and important are amongst the minority.

The survey results indicate the majority (82%) of respondents said ‘yes’ that they thought fire and emergency service work should be a recognised and certified profession. Of these respondents, almost all (94%) considered it either ‘quite’, ‘very’ or ‘extremely’ important. Throughout the survey there are comments that have been made that substantiate this result, however, they also expressed concern about the implementation of any Scheme possibly placing high time commitments on already stretched workers.

It is important to note that of those who answered ‘yes’ 69% were volunteers: *“Professionalisation offers an opportunity for a level playing field for EVERYONE”.*

Of those who said ‘no’ or ‘not sure’ they were more likely to be volunteers than staff and generally relate to an assumption any Scheme would result in a requirement to spend more time on training and increased paperwork. Given the relatively small sample size from the volunteer workforce (which make up the majority of emergency workers), the current result for volunteers needs to be more closely examined to establish the true weight of their views.

One of the significant outcomes from the survey was the perceived need for significant consultation, collaboration and communication – particularly in the initial stages. Given that nearly one in ten respondents (8%) do not see the need for the Scheme and substantial numbers are concerned about potential negative impacts of such a Scheme, this is an important consideration. It is appropriate to reiterate that this is preliminary consultation only and effectively an introduction to the concept of Professionalisation. It would take time and opportunity to reach people, particularly the volunteers.

From the results it can be seen that almost three quarters (72%) of respondents indicated they are willing to participate in any Scheme, with those in the 25-40 age group more likely to say they would participate. Older age groups indicated less willingness, however, expressed a desire to see the System support the industry into the future: *“more importantly – a greater chance of younger people coming in to take over my role.”*

Whilst the results are strongly in favour of Professionalisation, that could be due to the promise of the reaching agreement on the standard skills and qualifications (the education pathway) required for emergency management service delivery. Establishing such standards resonates throughout the responses and seems to suggest that regardless of whether a Professionalisation Scheme is enacted or not, these standards would be welcomed by emergency workers. It is important to note a high number of people are sceptical that agreement can be reached. In addition, they cite industrial relations issues as one of the prime barriers to any Scheme being successful.

The results of the consultation process are encouraging and in some circumstances somewhat surprising. The high number of people in favour of such a Scheme gives an indication that further investigation could be warranted and that there is a need for fire and emergency management work to be formally recognised in some way: *“if not a Professionalisation Scheme: then what?”*

How could it benefit the community?

“Does the community care?” This question was posed by a number of focus groups participants, with some suggesting that the community wouldn't necessarily care whether someone was a certified practitioner or not. It was felt that we should be asking them.

The preliminary consultation process deliberately did not seek the views of the community at this time, as it was felt more important for agencies and their workforce to consider this concept first. Respondents were asked however to consider the perspective of the community and what they felt were benefits to the community.

Some respondents (8%, generally in the older age group) didn't think the community would benefit at all; *‘I believe that most communities in Australia are provided with a high standard of FES now.’*

The most common survey responses when considering benefits to the community was the opportunity for excellence, consistency and public confidence in service delivery.

Who's it for and how could it benefit the emergency management worker?

The preliminary consultation was initially targeted at senior personnel and aspiring leaders (in AFAC member agencies) however it was also open to any other volunteer or staff member who wished to express a view. (The degree to which the opportunity was promoted was at the discretion of member agencies taking into account other organisational priorities.)

In assessing the results of the survey and focus group discussions it became evident that there is a strong desire for any Scheme to demonstrate where everyone fits into the bigger picture; particularly in relation to career (staff or volunteer) and education pathways. In saying that, most people recognised that the emergency management industry is broad, complex and covers a range of different hazards. 'Streaming' (as relevant to specific hazards or specialities) emerged as a possible solution that could be incorporated into the design of any Scheme.

While not directly the focus of this consultation those involved in emergency management work outside of AFAC member agencies were also seen to benefit from involvement in a Professionalisation Scheme. Private providers are keen to ensure the advice they are providing is in accordance with the latest industry knowledge and research and wish to reassure their customers of their credentials as independently validated. In addition, customers are also keen to ensure the providers (both public and private) of the services they are purchasing are appropriately accredited.

In summary, the benefits to individuals involved in emergency management work were seen to be:

- Recognition, transportability and career (staff and volunteer) opportunities, resulting in
- Respect amongst their peers, the community and other professions, giving them
- Greater confidence, heightened esteem and increased morale, personal satisfaction and motivation *“to be involved in a profession, rather than just a job.”*

What people fear?

Of prime concern to participants was the fear of a costly, complicated, bureaucratic and time-consuming Scheme that does not deliver on its promise and results in a *“complete waste of time”*. In addition, people feared that it could take the focus away from experience towards qualifications.

Both volunteers and staff assumed (incorrectly) that such a Scheme would replace the qualifications arrangements that exist now and result in them having to start over. This assumption underpinned some of the questions regarding *“what is the problem with the current qualifications frameworks?”*

Another common fear was, depending on how the Scheme was designed, it could either *“drive a deeper wedge”* or *“unite”* volunteers and staff. At the heart of this fear was the potential for volunteers to be excluded (due to the nature of volunteering, ie not the same availability of time and financial support) from the opportunity to participate in the attainment of the necessary skills, qualifications and experience needed to be certified under the Scheme.

Respondents also feared any mandating of the requirements for them to have credentials to perform their roles. This fear was expressed consistently and highlighted the concern that it could disenfranchise people who may not meet the criteria, particularly volunteers: *“the burden of participating may result in a loss of volunteers”*. It also was felt it would prevent capable people from being able to gain employment without the professional credentials.

Industrial relations and the assumption that staff participation in any Scheme would result in a campaign for increased wages and conditions was also a concern expressed by a large number of respondents. There was acknowledgement that a balance is required to reward and recognise the investment people make in their skills, knowledge and qualifications; however the increased cost burden on agencies to accommodate such a campaign was seen as a significant risk.

“The industry had raised the benchmark that bit higher for itself” is another fear expressed by a number of respondents. This was in the context of possible litigation given there are a significant number of Inquiries, Royal Commissions and possible litigation cases pending (particularly in Australia).

Finally, people don't believe that agencies will agree on the standards and stick to them. They fear that if they participate in the Scheme and the current issues around recognition of qualifications are not resolved they will be wasting their time and public money.

Implementing any Scheme

To aid the discussion an example of what the Scheme might look like and incorporate was made available. There was also early recognition that it will cost; someone will have to pay to administer any Scheme. As explained throughout the consultation process, the cost benefit of this proposal will need to be determined before any decision to proceed is made. Respondents suggested that such cost/benefit needs to be clear and meaningful, however, there is a degree of scepticism that any benefits would be realised given the lack of trust that agreement could be reached and maintained on the standards.

Should any Scheme be implemented however an appropriate transition process was seen to be crucial to allow people time to attain the required credentials *“without prejudice or being disadvantaged”* in the process. This was particularly important for those who volunteer their services.

The question of how it might be implemented was common with people reflecting (mostly negatively) on their experience of other professional bodies, for example, engineers, accountants, financial services, health. At the heart of their experience was a requirement for membership, for a fee, of that professional body and through that membership a perception that *“they didn’t really do anything for me, so I let my membership drop.”*

From the consultation process there is a question over who would administer any Scheme and whether there needs to be another Association or Institute created to which people would belong. It would appear that consideration should be given to disconnecting any requirement for an individual to be a member of an Association or Institute from the credentialing process. Too much negativity is associated with being a member of an Association/Institute and detracts from the real purpose of Professionalisation in the first place.

Whilst not directly applicable to any Professionalisation Scheme (but explicitly linked), the availability of flexible, accessible and high quality training, particularly for volunteers (including those in remote locations) was seen as crucial. The use of technology, particularly on-line opportunities was encouraged to allow for those who have trouble accessing other opportunities to train or attend education programs.

Throughout the preliminary consultation the requirement to ‘hasten slowly’ on this initiative was expressed to participants. Participants were appreciative of the opportunity to have a say and encouraged further consultation and communication.

Whilst the consultation process on Professionalisation was under way there have been other projects proceeding that has relevance to this work; in particular the Aviation Training Protocol and the revision of AIIMS, third edition. There is an opportunity to use both these projects to pilot aspects of a Professionalisation Scheme; however the risks of doing so are inherent in the views expressed through the consultation process.

Conclusions

The decision to undertake preliminary consultation on this topic has proven to be timely and appropriate. Nearly 600 people have participated, although Queensland and Victoria were over represented in this number.

The hypothesis upon which the consultation proceeded has been tested and validated. Importantly, the information now available can also be used to inform the design of any Model Scheme responding to opportunity as well addressing the risks.

Given the broad support amongst staff and volunteers for the need for a Scheme it could be said that there is support to go to the next phase (which is the feasibility study and to devise the Model). This support however is qualified and given the very long journey associated with the establishment of any Professionalisation Scheme, agencies need time to reflect and strategically analyse the implications.

This is a long-term strategic issue for the industry the outcomes of which are best described through one respondent's vision: *"At the end of the day, I want to be confident in my actions and protected by the existence of best practice or industry standards, so I can concentrate on executing my duties using all my skills and ability to the advantage of the community. I want to operate in the knowledge that those supervising me are highly competent and experienced (not just holding a piece of paper awarded through some corrupted process (I mean it has lost its way by losing sight of the intention for its existence). I want to be able to use full concentration on the task at hand to achieve the best outcome for the communities. If I am not competent I want to be judged by a fair and consistent process and told so.*

I want communities to have faith that a sound and well supported process has provided them with the best available officers to respond to whatever crisis has presented itself. I want to be provided with opportunity to train and practice in areas which support my skill set and interests within the requirements of my profession. I want to feel free to share analysis of my performance or decision making or my innovation to improve the standard practice resident within the certification of fire and emergency [management] professionals."

**AFAC
PROFESSIONALISATION SCHEME
PRELIMINARY CONSULTATION
SURVEY
2011**

August 2011

1. Executive Summary

1.1 Background and Research Design

A Fire & Emergency Services Professionalisation Scheme is being considered as a means to formally recognise existing skills and experience, to build these skills, and to ensure the best possible service to the community going forward.

AFAC Council, at its April 2011 meeting, agreed to undertake preliminary consultation within its member agencies and key stakeholders. The consultation was designed to determine:

- *Stakeholder views on the need for a Fire and Emergency Service Professionalisation Scheme, &*
- *The degree to which there is a willingness by the sector to engage in such a Scheme*

Also, the consultation was designed to obtain views on the following questions:

- Do you think that fire and emergency service work should be an officially recognised and certified profession? If so, how important is this?
- What opportunities and benefits do you believe you would get from such a Scheme?
- How do they think it would benefit the community?
- How would it assist the Sector into the future?
- What are the barriers to a successful Scheme? How might they be overcome?

This preliminary consultation has comprised a quantitative survey, the results of which are presented in this current report, and a qualitative project comprising focus groups.

A total of 403 respondents completed the online survey. This report represents these results.

1.2 Results

Support for Professionalisation

The results suggest there is broad support among both staff and volunteers for a Fire & Emergency Services Professionalisation Scheme.

The majority (82%) of respondents thought Fire & Emergency Service work should be a recognised and certified profession. Among those who said 'yes' Fire & Emergency Service work should be a recognised and certified Profession, almost all (94%) considered it either 'quite', 'very' or 'extremely' important.

One in ten (10%) were 'not sure' if it should be a recognised and certified profession and almost another tenth (8%) said 'no' they did not think it should be.

These views did not vary between males and females.

Support for professionalisation was greater among the younger age groups. A very high proportion of those in the 25-40 age groups answered 'yes' (92%) vs, 72% of those in the 51+ age group. The prevalence of this view among the younger age groups is encouraging given the current challenges with attracting younger recruits to the sector.

Conversely, of course, more of those in the 51+ age group (12%) responded 'no' to this question compared with only 4% in the 25-40 age group. Both these results were statistically significant. These findings are in line with the views on the importance of higher levels of education in public safety and, more than likely, reflect similar considerations eg nearing retirement.

Those who said 'no' they did not agree that F&ES work should be a recognised and certified profession, were asked to describe the reasons for their view. The vast majority of responses related to one central issue, viz., the perception of significant, additional workload/effort required to obtain certification, and the impacts this might have eg. in terms of keeping/attracting volunteers. This issue is reflected strongly in responses across a range of questions in this survey.

Other issues were reflected to a lesser degree, but still noted across respondents. These tended to relate to; 1) the perceptions of firefighting and volunteering, and, 2) the lack of benefits that would be delivered. Attitudes to learning, primarily among older respondents, also play a role, with some people in the industry believing that practical experience and 'on the job' learning are more important than 'academic' or 'book' learning. Some respondents also noted that a training skills package and national training standard already exist and that they believed the proposed professionalisation scheme provides no benefits over and above this. This issue arose across the survey among a small but noteworthy number of responses.

Perceived Benefits to the Community

Respondents were asked to comment on the way/s in which they thought a Fire & Emergency Services Professionalisation Scheme would benefit the community. The responses can be summed up as;

- Excellence, Consistency and Public Confidence in Service Delivery

The most prevalent responses revolved around the issue of recognition by the community of the skills of workers and the associated trust and public confidence. Also quite prevalent were responses dealing with improved quality/consistency of service delivery.

“Professionalisation would guarantee peace of mind to communities enduring fires and emergencies that the best qualified people are doing their job.”

It is important to note also that almost one in ten respondents (n=33 or 8%) said they saw 'no benefit' to the community of a Fire & Emergency Services Professionalisation Scheme.

“I believe that most communities in Australia are provided with a high standard of Fire and Emergency Services now.”

Further analysis reveals that those who saw no benefit to the community of a Professionalisation Scheme were generally in the older age groups. This result, given the small sample sizes, is indicative rather than conclusive.

There are likely to be a range of reasons for this. Perhaps the clearest reason would be attitudes to learning. Verbatim comments across the survey suggest that older respondents tend to put more importance on experience and 'on the job'/practical training and skills rather than formal qualifications. In fact, some comments suggest that it is seen as detrimental to attract potential staff and volunteers who are more 'academic'.

Analysis also shows that the proportion of volunteers seeing no benefit to the community was larger than the proportion of staff. However these numbers are too small to draw conclusive findings. Once again, it is possible that it is the older members of both these groups which tend to have this view.

Perceived Benefits to Workers

The way/s in which they thought a Fire & Emergency Services Professionalisation Scheme would benefit themselves were sought.

The most prevalent responses can be summed up as; Recognition, transportable skills and enhanced career prospects. The responses also strongly reflected: Better morale, better skills and ability to deliver best service.

One in ten respondents (n=40 or 10%) saw no opportunities and/or benefits to themselves from a Professionalisation Scheme. Further analysis reveals similar results for the benefits to the community. Older respondents are more likely to see no benefits to them and this result is the same for volunteers.

Nearing the latter part of their career, on in fact, being close to retirement are key factors here. Attitudes to learning also play a role as previously indicated. Also, verbatim comments indicate that, understandably, there are more volunteers who do not seek career advancement. Hence, there is a reduced perceived need for such a scheme.

Concerns with the time required to be part of a Professionalisation Scheme also counteract potential benefits.

Potential Advantages of Professionalisation

A number of statements were listed representing some attitudes towards making fire and emergency services work a profession. Respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they either agreed or disagreed with each of these attitudinal statements.

The highest level of agreement was with the following statements:

- There will be an accepted standard for consistent education, training, experience and behaviour – 86% ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’
- Recognition of skills and experience of Fire & Emergency Service workers will go up – 82% ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’
- It will better prepare the next generation(s) of public safety leaders – 80% ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’

These results reflect the responses given in the open-ended, verbatim questions. It is also important to note that for each of these three statements between 6-14% of respondents said they ‘disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’.

Somewhat lower, but nonetheless, substantial levels of agreement were found with the following statements:

- Accountability to the public will be strengthened – 75% ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’
- The quality and consistency of services delivered will go up – 67% ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’
- The talent pool of Fire & Emergency Service professionals will increase – 63% ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’

Respondents were asked to list any other advantages they saw in turning Fire & Emergency Service work into a profession which had not been listed.

The most prevalent perceived advantages were strongly in line with those given in response to other questions.

- Recognition / recognition of current knowledge and skills / recognition of knowledge and skills of volunteers / better recognition of the skills and experience needed to do the job

“Volunteers are often NOT thought of as ‘professional’, especially within the fire agencies. So respect for volunteers would increase.”

- Improved morale / self-esteem / pride / greater sense of worth / sense of achievement
- Build higher confidence in workers of their own ability and expertise /ability to do the job
- Opportunity to improve knowledge and skills / opportunity to study / for further learning
- More transportable skills / between different agencies / between States / across the Sector
- Better working relationships between agencies / greater inter-agency awareness and collaboration/communication/greater respect
- Better working relationships between paid staff and volunteers / greater respect by staff of volunteers

Disadvantages of Professionalisation

Respondents were asked to say what they thought were the disadvantages to making Fire & Emergency Service work a profession. A total of 62% of respondents listed at least one potential disadvantage. Given the overall support for professionalisation suggested by the rest of the questionnaire responses, it is important that there is broad concern with possible disadvantages.

The most strongly highlighted disadvantage was the additional time and cost pressures it may place on staff and volunteers. The second most strongly highlighted disadvantage was the potential reduction in quality of service delivery due to a shift in focus. A range of other potential disadvantages were also listed but less frequently.

A number of statements were then listed representing some possible disadvantages of making fire and emergency services work a profession. Respondents indicated the degree to which they either agreed or disagree with each of these attitudinal statements.

Many respondents (71%) agreed, at least partly, that a disadvantage of professionalisation would be 'Frustration with paperwork such as collecting Continual Professional Development (CPD) points'.

Two-thirds (66%) agreed, at least partly, that a disadvantage of professionalisation would be 'The time it would take to do what is required to meet the requirements of Professionalisation eg. Obtain qualification, certification, doing ongoing professional development'. The level of agreement with this statement reflects responses across the rest of the survey.

Just over two-thirds (69%) agreed, at least partly, that a disadvantage of professionalisation would be 'The cost to become a professional and stay a professional might be too high eg. Association membership, cost of ongoing professional development (workshop, courses, seminars)'. Again, the level of agreement with this statement reflects responses across the rest of the survey.

Anticipated Career Progression

Just under a third (30%) of respondents rated the chance of their career progressing as a result of being certified as a Fire & Emergency Service professional as 'low' (when looking at those for whom career progress is applicable).

A total of 70% rated the chance of their career progressing as 'high' or 'very high'.

Females were more likely to rate the chances of their career progressing as 'very high'. Those in the younger age group of 25-40 years were also more likely to rate the chances as 'very high'. Conversely, those in the 51+ age group were more likely to rate the chances of their career progressing as 'low' (44%).

Volunteers were much more polarised than staff on this issue, being more likely to say the changes were 'low' but also more likely to say the chances were 'high'.

Anticipated Participation in Professionalisation Scheme

Almost three-quarters of respondents (72%) said 'yes' they would participate in a Professionalisation Scheme. Almost one in five (19%) indicated they were 'not sure'. Just under one in ten (9%) said 'no' they would not participate.

Males were more likely to say they would participate (74%) although this was not statistically significantly different to the result for females. However, what was statistically significantly different was the fact that females were more likely than males to say they were 'not sure' if they would participate. This is an interesting result given that females earlier were more likely to rate their chances of career progression as very high as a result of professionalisation. These results are of some concern. It could be hypothesised that perceptions of the time commitments and difficulty of participating in a professionalisation scheme weigh more heavily with females and that as a result, any such scheme needs to be cognisant of this in order to ensure equal opportunity for women to participate in the scheme.

Those in the 25-40 age group were highly likely to say they would participate (83%). This too is an encouraging result, suggesting that such a scheme may contribute to overcoming the challenge of attracting younger people to the sector.

Staff were more likely to say yes they would participate (76%) than volunteers. Volunteers were much more likely to say they were 'unsure' whether they would participate (26%).

Respondents who said 'no' or 'not sure' were then asked to describe their reasons. Nearing retirement, already having the qualifications and training they needed, not wanting to put in the extra time required and the lack of perceived benefits were among the most commonly cited reasons. Similar reasons were given by those who were not sure if they would participate.

Respondents were asked what would motivate them to participate in a Fire & Emergency Service Professionalisation Scheme. The responses provided strongly reflected the results of previous questions. The most prevalent answers, unsurprisingly related to recognition.

- *Being recognised as a professional in my field of expertise / recognition / recognition of skills / recognition of qualifications by other industries /across agencies / interstate/ international*

The second most prevalent answers related to specific benefits to the individual worker and then thirdly, benefit to the community via delivery of best possible service. In addition, attributes of the scheme were noted as motivations, in particular, the scheme being clearly communicated, well-structured and providing enough support for workers in terms of time and costs.

Respondents were then presented with a list of possible motivations for participating in a Fire & Emergency Service Professionalisation Scheme and asked to rate each one for how important it was to them. Unsurprisingly, in accord with the responses from other questions, recognition arose as the strongest motivation, as evidenced in the level of response to three statements all relating in some way to recognition. The issue of belonging to a network of peers was rated as at least 'quite important' by 74% of respondents, suggesting that, whilst it has not been mentioned by large numbers of respondents in other questions, when prompted, it is actually important. Career advancement too is rated as at least 'quite important' by 68% of respondents, again reflecting the responses to other questions.

Barriers to a Professionalisation Scheme

With regard to perceived barriers to a Professionalisation Scheme, by far the most prevalent responses related to the cost and time commitments required by such a scheme. The anticipated nature of the scheme itself was listed as a concern particularly the potential complexity of the scheme. Thirdly, barriers were noted with regard to obtaining agreement and acceptance of the scheme by staff and volunteers, unions and across states and ES groups/sectors. A barrier was also noted with regards to the diversity of the field which needed to be covered.

A follow-up question was asked regarding how these barriers might be overcome. The most prevalent responses related to the way in which the scheme is implemented, with a strong focus on consultation and communications.

“Early, open and honest consultation”

“Appropriate change management and education strategies”

The second most prevalent responses related to: Money / funding / budget. Once again, specific attributes of the scheme were noted.

1.3 Conclusions

The key conclusions with regard to the objectives are:

- **Yes, it appears a large proportion of the sector perceive a need for a Fire and Emergency Service Professionalisation Scheme**
- **Yes, there appears to be a willingness by a reasonably high proportion of the sector to engage in such a Scheme**

What is the perceived need?

This survey has revealed considerable perceived need in the sector. This is perhaps unsurprising considering the dedication of people across the sector and how important they consider their service to the community. Importantly, underlying all of the perceived needs is one factor – ***delivering the best possible service to the community.***

Building on the first objective, then, the perceived need is:

- To increase public confidence and trust in Fire and Emergency Services
- To increase public awareness and knowledge of the skills, experience and training in the sector (supports confidence and trust)
- To increase public accountability
- To give much needed recognition to those working in the sector – recognition from the public, from management, their peers, between agencies and between staff and volunteers
- Optimisation and increased consistency of service delivery
- Standardisation of training and optimisation of the training delivered

- To ensure volunteers and staff are all properly trained to a standard and have the right attitude to deliver the best possible service to every community at all times
- Better working relationships between agencies/between staff and volunteers
- For workers to feel confident they are equipped in the best possible way – including training, equipment, support from management, their peers and other workers - to deliver the best possible service to the community at all times
- To increase transportability of skills across agencies and across the country
- To enhance career prospects for those who seek them
- To provide a clear career path within the sector
- To work in the sector without feeling overburdened by unrealistic expectations of time and effort commitments
- To attract the best possible new recruits to the sector, recruits who are joining for the right reasons and who have the right attitude to the job and who are interested in developing the skills to deliver an optimum service to the community

In terms of the five key questions of this preliminary consultation, the conclusions are:

- ***Do you think that fire and emergency service work should be an officially recognised and certified profession? If so, how important is this?***

Most (82%) of survey respondents answered 'yes' when asked this question directly. This represented 69% of volunteers and 88% of staff. Hence, a majority of both worker groups supported this statement. Among those who said 'yes' Fire & Emergency Service work should be a recognised and certified Profession, almost all (94%) considered it either 'quite', 'very' or 'extremely' important. Hence the perceived level of importance is very high. Encouragingly, support was extremely high among the younger age groups, suggesting professionalisation of the sector may contribute to attracting younger recruits.

Of the 18% who said 'no' or 'not sure' if Fire & Emergency Service work should be a recognised and certified Profession the key reason for this was:

- the perception of significant, additional workload/effort required to obtain certification.

- ***What opportunities and benefits do you believe you would get from such a Scheme?***

'Recognition, transportable skills and enhanced career prospects' sum up the most frequently mentioned opportunities and benefits to themselves which workers perceived. Better morale, better skills and ability to deliver best service were also mentioned by a reasonably high proportion of respondents. Importantly, however, 10% of respondents said they saw 'no benefits' to themselves of this Scheme. These tended to be those in the older age groups. Also, volunteers were somewhat more likely to agree. Attitudes to learning have been noted as a key factor here in addition to proximity to retirement.

- ***How do they think it would benefit the community?***

'Excellence, Consistency and Public Confidence in Service Delivery' best summarise the perceived benefits to the community of a Professionalisation Scheme.

The most prevalent responses revolved around the issue of recognition by the community of the skills of workers and the associated trust and public confidence.

Again, 8% said they saw 'no benefit' to the community of this Scheme. Attitudes to learning and concerns regarding time pressures to be involved in professionalisation were key.

- ***How would it assist the Sector into the future?***

Most respondents agreed with a number of key ways in which professionalisation would assist the Sector:

- There will be an accepted standard for consistent education, training, experience and behaviour
- Recognition of skills and experience of Fire & Emergency Service workers will go up
- It will better prepare the next generation(s) of public safety leaders

There was also a slightly lesser but still very substantial level of agreement that:

- Accountability to the public will be strengthened
- The quality and consistency of services delivered will go up

In addition, many respondents felt professionalisation would go some way to addressing the range of perceived needs noted earlier in these conclusions.

- ***What are the barriers to a successful Scheme? How might they be overcome?***

Cost and time commitments required by such a scheme were clearly perceived to be the main barrier. The potential complexity of the scheme was also seen as a key barrier as was obtaining agreement and acceptance of the scheme by staff and volunteers, unions and across states and ES groups/sectors.

The key way to overcoming these barriers was clearly seen to be the way in which the scheme is implemented, the key success factors being seen to be consultation and communications.

Final Conclusions

The current survey results suggest broad support for a professionalisation scheme for Fire & Emergency Services, particularly among younger respondents, suggesting professionalisation is likely to attract younger recruits to the sector.

However, a small but notable proportion of the sector does not support the scheme. This proportion is greater in the older age group and among volunteers. Concerns about perceived time commitments with such a scheme play a large role in this regard, particularly among females, both staff and volunteers.

These results should be considered within the context that three-quarters of those responding to the survey were staff. Given the very large volunteer group within the sector, albeit only a proportion of it involved at a high level of time commitment, the current results from volunteers need to be looked at closely in understanding what the true weight of views is across the sector.

Overall, many people in this sector would be prepared to participate in a Professionalisation Scheme to:

- Continue to learn and increase their skills
- Be certified as a professional
- Have more transportable skills
- Have enhanced career prospects and a clear career path

A proportion of people want to:

- Continue working in the latter part of their career before retirement without significantly increased time and effort commitments to participate in a professionalisation scheme, or,
- Continue working in their role generally, no matter what their age, without significantly increased time and effort commitments to participate in a professionalisation scheme. Some of these people have considerable time commitments outside the sector eg., family, their own business. Some are volunteers and see their current level of volunteering effort as 'enough'.

Another substantial proportion of people:

- See the value of a professionalisation scheme both to the community and potentially to themselves, but feel the time and effort required to participate would preclude their involvement. Whilst the results are only indicative, this appears to be more of an issue for females in the sector.

Despite the high level of support for professionalisation, many respondents to this survey – both supporter and non-supporters - have concerns about the implementation of the scheme particularly potentially placing high time commitments on already stretched workers.

Perhaps the most important outcome from this survey is the perceived need for significant consultation, collaboration and communication – particularly in the initial stages - in order for a successful implementation of a Professionalisation Scheme. Given at least one in ten workers are not convinced of the need for the scheme and, in fact, substantial numbers are concerned about the potentially negative impacts of such a scheme, this result is doubly important.

Over and above the issue of professionalisation, the results of the current survey taken as a whole, suggest a group of workers looking for greater recognition. Whether a professionalisation scheme comes into being or not, this is an issue for the organisation to address in order to meet the needs of its people.

Finally, this survey process has highlighted the issue - 'what does professionalism actually mean?'. Many staff and volunteers already consider themselves professional and any scheme which is implemented needs to acknowledge current perceptions and skills and to confirm that a move to a professionalisation scheme is about honouring and building on the already existing high level of professionalism in this increasingly important sector.

2. Project Background and Research Design

Fire and emergency service work is highly respected in the community and by all those who work in the sector. Fire and emergency service workers are extremely professional in their approach to supporting their communities and each other.

A Professionalisation Scheme is being considered as a means to formally recognise these skills and experience and to ensure the best possible service to the community going forward.

AFAC Council, at its April 2011 meeting, agreed to undertake preliminary consultation within its member agencies and key stakeholders.

Objectives

The consultation was designed to determine:

- *Stakeholder views on the need for a Fire and Emergency Service Professionalisation Scheme, &*
- *The degree to which there is a willingness by the sector to engage in such a Scheme*

Also, importantly, the consultation was designed to obtain views on the following questions:

- Do you think that fire and emergency service work should be an officially recognised and certified profession? If so, how important is this?
- What opportunities and benefits do you believe you would get from such a Scheme?
- How do they think it would benefit the community?
- How would it assist the Sector into the future?
- What are the barriers to a successful Scheme? How might they be overcome?

Consultation Design

This consultation has comprised:

- A quantitative survey, the results of which are presented in this current report
- A qualitative project comprising focus groups

The survey questionnaire was designed in-house by AFAC staff and reviewed by a professional and experienced social research consultant before finalisation.

AFAC staff who facilitated the focus groups also had considerable experience in the conduct of these types of sessions with organisation members. These were also provided with a training session by a professional and highly experienced focus group moderator prior to the conduct of the focus groups.

A total of 403 respondents completed the online survey. This report represents these results. In addition, focus group attendees also completed the survey. The results of these surveys are included in the focus group report.

The final draft of the current report was compiled by an experienced social research professional, with skills in the analysis of quantitative data. Allowance was made for any last final, minor

additions by AFAC, excluding any changes to the data included or the presentation of and commentary on the results.

3. The Current Report

The results in this report are presented in line with the flow of questions in the survey questionnaire.

Demographic data for the responses is presented first. This is followed by all attitudinal responses. A range of key questions have been cross-tabulated to determine the views of:

- males vs females,
- across age groups, and for
- volunteers and staff

A series of questions asking for open-ended, verbatim responses have resulted in a wealth of information.

4. The Results

The survey results are presented below.

Before going on to the results of the survey some points need to be noted with regard to the analysis, viz,

- When making comparisons between sub-groups eg males vs females, reliable comparisons can only be made where the subgroups are large enough. Generally if a subgroup comprises 30 or more respondents, it is large enough to be analysed. If a subgroup comprises less than 30 respondents eg the subgroup of people aged <25 years contains on 8 people, then findings about this group are only indicative.
- In the tables throughout this report, noteworthy results are highlighted in bold. Some of these results are statistically significant, and where this is the case, this is noted in the commentary. Other results highlighted in bold may also be noteworthy and discussed but are not statistically significant unless noted.
- Where a result is noted as statistically significant, what this means is that the difference between two groups of respondents in this survey, can be reliably said to exist within the two groups in the population. For examples, females were more likely to answer 'yes' to a question than males. If there is a difference but it is not statistically significant, it may still be worth noting that there may well be a difference in the population. However, we cannot be statistically certain this is the case on the basis of the survey results.

4.1 Who Responded – Demographics

A total of 403 respondents completed the survey. The results for the key demographics are shown below.

This level of response rate for a self-completion survey is excellent and reflects the dedication of Fire & Emergency Services staff and volunteers. This was also reflected in the detailed verbatim responses provided to the open-ended questions.

4.1.1 Gender

Of the total number of respondents 83% listed their gender as 'male' and 17% as female, a good representation of the gender balance in the overall population of volunteers and staff.

1. Are you: Female, Male.

Female	17%	70
Male	83%	333

4.1.2 Age

Just over a quarter (29%) of respondents were aged 51 years and over, with just over a third (37%) aged 41-50 years. Another third (32%) were aged 25-40 years with just 2% aged less than 25 years.

2. Which age category do you belong to?

Less than 25 years	2%	8
25-40 years	32%	127
41-50 years	37%	149
51 years and over	29%	119

Given the very small number of respondents in the <25 yrs age group, observations about differences across age groups can only be reliably made among the other three categories.

4.1.3 Place of Work

Responses were received across all geographic locations.

However, the sample is somewhat over-representative of Queensland and Victoria. This needs to be kept in mind when reading through the results.

3. Where is your place of work?

Australian Capital Territory	6%	24
New South Wales	9%	35
New Zealand	4%	16
Northern Territory	<1%	2
Queensland	25%	99
South Australia	5%	20
Tasmania	4%	17
Victoria	39%	159
Western Australia	7%	29
None of the above	<1%	2

4.1.4 AFAC Member Agency – Volunteer or Staff

Just under a quarter (24%) of respondents were volunteers with just under three-quarters (74%) being staff members.

The results in this survey should be considered within the context that 74% of those responding to the survey were staff.

Given the very large volunteer group within the sector, albeit only a proportion of it involved at a high level of time commitment, the current results from volunteers need to be looked at closely in understanding what the true weight of views is across the sector.

Also, given the very small number of respondents in the 'both' and 'neither' groups, comparisons will be made solely between the 'volunteer' and 'staff' categories.

4. Are you a volunteer or staff member of an AFAC Member Agency?

Volunteer	24%	97
Staff Member	74%	298
Both	1%	6
Neither (pls describe)	<1%	2

4.1.5 Fire & Emergency Service Area of Work

The majority of respondents (64%) listed themselves as 'Firefighter/Emergency service worker'. About a fifth (22%) were in 'Emergency management'. Smaller numbers were 'technical specialists' (11%) and in 'policy/research' (3%).

5. Which one of the categories below best describes the area of Fire & Emergency Service work you are most involved in?

Emergency management	22%	88
Firefighter/Emergency service worker	64%	258
Technical specialist	11%	45
Policy/Research	3%	12

4.1.6 Type of Agency

Over two-thirds (38%) of respondents were in 'Fire and Rescue' and just over a quarter (29%) were from 'Emergency services'. A quarter (27%) was in 'land management'. A modest percentage (5%) was from 'rural/bushfire service'.

6. Which type of agency are you with?

Land management	27%	107
Fire and Rescue	38%	152
Emergency services	29%	118
Rural/Bushfire Service	5%	22
Other (pls describe)	1%	4

4.1.7 Highest Level of Public Safety Qualification Held

A third (33%) of those responding to the survey had no formal public safety qualification.

A total of 15% had a Certificate II, 7% a Certificate III, 12% a Certificate IV and 12% a Diploma. Just on 18% had higher qualifications.

7. What is the highest level public safety qualification you have?

Certificate II	15%	61
Certificate III	7%	28
Certificate IV	12%	47
Diploma	12%	49
Advanced Diploma	5%	22
Vocational Graduate Certificate	4%	17
Graduate Diploma	5%	22
Higher Education	4%	18
None	33%	133
Other (pls describe)	1%	6

4.2 Importance of Attaining Higher Level Education in Public Safety

Over half (54%) of those who responded to the survey said it was either 'extremely important' or 'very important' for themselves to attain a higher level of education in public safety. Almost another quarter (23%) said it was 'quite important'. Thus, overall, the majority of respondents consider it important to attain more education in this area.

Conversely, just under a quarter of all respondents (23%) considered it 'not very important' or 'not at all important'.

8. How important is it to you to attain a higher level education in public safety?

Extremely important	23%
Very important	31%
Quite important	23%
Not very important	18%
Not at all important	5%

	Total %	Gender %		Age %				Volunteer or Staff %	
		F	M	<25 years	25-40 years	41-50 years	51+ years	Volunteer	Staff
Extremely important	23	13	26	75	25	23	18	22	24
Very important	31	33	31	12	34	33	27	30	30
Quite important	23	23	23	12	26	19	24	19	25
Not very important	18	25	16	0	13	20	21	20	17
Not at all important	5	7	5	0	2	4	10	8	4
n=	403	70	333	8*	127	149	119	97	298

* small number of respondents in this subgroup

A greater proportion of males (26%) said that it was 'extremely important' for them to attain a higher level education in public safety. The difference between males and females in this regard was statistically significant. Why this is the case is unclear however some verbatim comments suggesting concerns with the time commitments for additional training are instructive. It could be hypothesised that females have greater time commitments already outside of their staff/volunteer work and that hence, this issue is a greater concern for females. Furthermore, it is possible, potentially for similar reasons, that a smaller proportion of females seek career advancement in this area. Perceptions of longer hours at more senior levels may compound this factor for women.

There was a greater tendency for females to say it was 'not very important' to attain a higher level education in public safety but this result was not statistically significant.

Those aged 51 years and over were less likely to say it was 'extremely important' to attain a higher level education in public safety (18%). This result was statistically significant in comparison

with the 25-40 years group (25%). Looking across age groups it appears that there is a trend. The older the age group the more likely it is considered not important to attain a higher level education in public safety.

This is not surprising given some of the responses to the verbatim questions which suggest those in the older age groups may be nearing retirement or at least the latter part of their career and hence consider it not worth investing for such a short period of time. Other verbatim comments also cast light on this, indicating that some older respondents believe they are already highly qualified or have many years of experience already, an understandable perspective.

The views of volunteers and staff on this question were very similar.

4.3 Perceived Need for Professionalisation

The majority (82%) of respondents said that they thought Fire & Emergency Service work should be a recognised and certified profession.

One in ten (10%) were 'not sure' and almost another tenth (8%) said 'no' they did not think that Fire & Emergency Service work should be a recognised and certified profession.

9. Do you think that Fire & Emergency Service work should be a recognised and certified Profession?

Yes	82%	322
No	8%	30
Not sure	10%	39

Interestingly, these views did not vary between males and females. Whilst females see the need for professionalisation, additional training associated with this may be perceived to require too much extra time commitment.

A very high proportion of those in the 25-40 age group answered 'yes' (92%) vs, 72% of those in the 51+ age group. The prevalence of this view among the younger age groups is encouraging given the current challenges with attracting younger recruits to the sector.

A greater proportion of those in the 51+ age group (12%) responded 'no' to this question than the 25-40 age group of which only 4% answered 'no'. Both these results were statistically significantly different from the results for the 25-40 age group. These results are in line with the views on the importance of higher levels of education in public safety and, more than likely, reflect similar considerations eg., nearing retirement.

Staff were more likely to agree (86%), the difference between staff and volunteers (69%) being statistically significant. Volunteers were more likely to answer 'no' (18%) or 'not sure' (13%). Again, verbatim comments shed light on these views.

	Total %	Gender %		Age %				Volunteer or Staff %	
		F	M	<25 years	25-40 years	41-50 years	51+ years	Volunteer	Staff
Yes	82	81	83	88	92	82	72	69	86
No	8	6	8	0	4	7	12	18	4
Not sure	10	13	10	12	4	11	16	13	10
n=	403	70	333	8*	127	149	119	97	298

Among those who said 'yes' Fire & Emergency Service work should be a recognised and certified Profession (as shown above, being 82% of all respondents), almost all (94%) considered it either 'quite', 'very' or 'extremely' important.

9.2. If yes, how important is it to you that there is a Fire & Emergency Services Professionalisation Scheme?

Extremely important	24%	76
Very important	42%	135
Quite important	29%	93
Not very important	5%	15
Not at all important	1%	2

This view did not vary substantially across gender, age or between volunteers and staff.

	Total %	Gender %		Age %				Volunteer or Staff %	
		F	M	<25 years	25-40 years	41-50 years	51+ years	Volunteer	Staff
Extremely important	24	26	24	28	24	27	20	25	24
Very important	42	44	42	43	43	42	42	40	42
Quite important	28	25	29	29	28	25	34	28	29
Not very important	5	5	4	0	3	6	5	8	4
Not at all important	1	0	<1	0	1	1	0	0	1

Having looked at the importance attached to this issue among those who said 'yes' they agreed that F&ES work should be a recognised and certified profession, those who said 'no' they did not agree that F&ES work should be a recognised and certified profession, were asked to describe the reasons for their view.

Question 9 Do you think that F&ES work should be a recognised and certified profession?

9.1. If no, please explain why: *Verbatim Responses Provided. (n=30)*

The vast majority of responses related to one central issue viz.,

- the perception of significant, additional workload/effort required to obtain certification.

This issue is reflected strongly in responses across a range of questions in this survey. The related issue of the impacts this might have eg in terms of keeping/attracting volunteers also rated a considerable number of mentions.

- *Too much work getting the qualifications / would require too great a commitment of time and effort from volunteers*
- *Will put more pressure on already stretched services*
- *Volunteers are already under too much pressure & this will only increase the pressure even more / the impact and demands on volunteers are already excessive*
- *Will make it harder to get volunteers / all the extra requirements will be an added disincentive to become a volunteer*
- *May lose staff/volunteers who consider it all too hard*
- *Most volunteers are already professionals in other fields and probably don't want to put the additional effort into also 'professionalising' for a voluntary role as well*
- *Fine to expect it of paid staff/professionals, not of volunteers / not a reasonable ask of unpaid volunteers*

Other issues were reflected to a lesser degree, but still noted across respondents. These tended to relate to two issues; 1) the perceptions of firefighting and volunteering, and, 2) the lack of benefits that will be delivered.

- *Firefighting is a skilled trade not a profession*
- *Would impact badly on/remove the concept of 'volunteering'*

and,

- *It won't increase the level of service offered by volunteers*
- *Just creating a new bureaucracy which uses up funds/resources and creates cushy/admin jobs*

It is also worth noting some answers from question 13. This question asked about advantages of professionalisation. However, a small number of respondents provided a particular reason why they saw no need for a professionalisation scheme, viz., that a training skills package and national training standard already exist and that the proposed professionalisation scheme provides no benefits over and above this. This issue arose across the survey among a small but noteworthy number of responses.

"We are doing fine thanks. We do a good job. We keep the community as safe as we can. We don't need to be 'loaded up' with more work or courses. We have an ongoing training skill package that turns us into competent firefighters."

"I think the national training standard that SES uses has already delivered much of the benefit so I am not sure what the additional benefits of a professional scheme will be."

“We already have accepted standards of Training (AFC, PSM modules).”

Those who said they were ‘not sure’ if F&ES work should be a recognised and certified profession, were also asked to describe the reasons for their view.

Question 9 Do you think that Fire & Emergency Service work should be a recognised and certified Profession?

9.3 If not sure, please explain why? (n=39)

Again the perception of significant, additional workload/effort required to obtain certification, and the impacts this might have eg in terms of keeping/attracting volunteers came through as a key issue.

- *Volunteer workloads / timeframes excessive already*
- *Could lead to inadequate volunteer numbers*
- *Will drive out existing volunteers*
- *Will direct already stretched resources/funds/time and effort to training and bureaucracy*

These respondents also indicated they had doubts and/or questions about certification

- *Don't know enough about the idea to make a decision*
- *Have many questions about how it will be implemented*
- *Have doubts about it*
- *Not sure how it could cover such a broad industry*
- *Not sure what value it will add / not sure it adds value/ don't see any benefit*

Other issues were reflected to a lesser degree, but still noted across respondents.

- *Volunteer skills already seen as professional*
- *May deepen already existing divide between volunteers and paid staff*
- *Accreditation through DSE exists already / already systems in place for ensuring adequate training / PSTP already available for this purpose*
- *No demand for it from the market place*
- *Current gaps in skill sets at base levels need to be addressed before embarking on such a high level and high expense route*

4.4 Anticipated Benefits of Professionalisation

4.4.1 Benefits to the Community

Respondents were asked to comment on the way/s in which they thought a Fire & Emergency Services Professionalisation Scheme would benefit the community. The responses can be summed up as;

- Excellence, Consistency and Public Confidence in Service Delivery

Question 10

How do you think that a Fire & Emergency Services Professionalisation Scheme would benefit the community?

The most prevalent responses revolved around the issue of recognition by the community of the skills of workers and the associated trust and public confidence.

- Increase public confidence / trust / reassurance
- Increase awareness among the community of how highly skilled and trained people are / Give recognition to volunteers / recognition of standards required / recognised as skilled and qualified professionals not just community volunteers / recognition that volunteers have real skills
- Way of demonstrating / concrete evidence to the community that there is a professional approach and structure

“Improved outcomes through consistent, high quality service delivery and agency management. Increased community confidence, through reassurance that there is consistency in skills held by public safety officers.”

“This should portray to the community that Volunteer ESO’s aren’t just weekend warriors, rather an unpaid professional group of emergency response organisations.”

Also quite prevalent were responses dealing with improved quality/consistency of service delivery.

- Increased professionalism of the industry / Ensure a high level of professionalism
- Increased quality of service / improved service delivery
- Increase consistency of service delivery / ensuring a consistent approach / Increase service consistency across Australia / more professional industry at nationally
- Ensure skills levels kept high
- Ensuring training is kept at a high level / consistency of training
- Standardisation of approach across communities

“Professionalisation would guarantee peace of mind to communities enduring fires and emergencies that the best qualified people are doing their job.”

It is important to note also that almost one in ten respondents (n=33 or 8%) said;

- they saw ‘no benefit’ to the community of a Fire & Emergency Services Professionalisation Scheme.

“I believe that most communities in Australia are provided with a high standard of Fire and Emergency Services now.”

“I do not believe it will benefit the community as it would prevent capable staff from being able to gain employment without the professional credentials.”

Further analysis reveals that those who saw no benefit to the community of a Professionalisation Scheme were generally in the older age groups. This result, given the small sample sizes, is indicative rather than conclusive.

There are likely to be a range of reasons for this. Perhaps the clearest reason would be attitudes to learning. Verbatim comments across the survey suggest that older respondents tend to put more importance on experience and ‘on the job’/practical training and skills rather than formal qualifications. In fact, some comments suggest that it is seen as detrimental to attract potential staff and volunteers who are more ‘academic’.

Analysis also shows that the proportion of volunteers seeing no benefit to the community was larger than the proportion of staff. However these numbers are too small to draw conclusive

findings. Once again, it is possible that it is the older members of both these groups which tend to have this view.

	Total %	Age %				Volunteer or Staff %	
		<25 years	25-40 years	41-50 years	51+ years	Volunteer	Staff
n= 33	8		4.7 (n=6)	6.7 (n=10)	14.3 (n=17)	13.4 (n=13)	6.7 (n=20)

NB: Age and Volunteer vs. Staff are indicated as a percentage of the total number of respondents in that age or work category (not as a percentage of the total number of respondents).

4.4.2 Benefits to Fire & Emergency Service workers

Respondents were asked to comment on the way/s in which they thought a Fire & Emergency Services Professionalisation Scheme would benefit themselves.

Question 11

What opportunities and benefits do you think you yourself would get from such a Scheme?

The most prevalent responses can be summed up as;

- Recognition, transportable skills and enhanced career prospects
- *Recognition / recognition of current knowledge and skills / recognition of knowledge and skills of volunteers / better recognition of the skills and experience needed to do the job*
- *More transportable skills / between different agencies / between States / across the Sector*
- *Better employment prospects / better career opportunities / better career development opportunities / improve job opportunities*
- *Ability to move into a career path associated with this field*
- *Opportunity to formalise existing skills base*
- *Improved chances to gain FT employment within an Emergency Services org'n*
- *Formal career path within the emergency mgt sector*

The responses also strongly reflected:

- Better morale, better skills and ability to deliver best service
- *Opportunity to improve knowledge and skills / opportunity to study / for further learning*
- *Greater opportunities for professional development*
- *Create new networks/linkages with others through prof. development*
- *Keeping skills base up to date*
- *Ability to delivery best possible service to community*
- *Improved morale /self-esteem/pride/greater sense of worth/sense of achievement*

A number of other responses came from individual respondents.

- *Having properly skilled volunteers working for me in the field*
- *Better platform from which to campaign for better wages and conditions*

One in ten respondents (n=40 or 10%) saw no opportunities and/or benefits to themselves from a Professionalisation Scheme.

- Nil/none

“None. It just means I have to jump through more hoops and suck more eggs.”

“None for me as I am nearing retirement.”

Further analysis reveals similar results for the benefits to the community. Older respondents are more likely to see no benefits to them and this result is the same for volunteers.

Nearing the latter part of their career, on in fact, being close to retirement are key factors here. Attitudes to learning also play a role as previously indicated. Also, verbatim comments indicate that, understandably, there are more volunteers who do not seek career advancement. Hence, there is a reduced perceived need for such a scheme.

Concerns with the time required to be part of a Professionalisation Scheme also counteract potential benefits.

	% of total respondents	Age %				Volunteer or Staff %	
		<25 years	25-40 years	41-50 years	51+ years	Volunteer	Staff
n= 40	10		3.9 (n=5)	10.7 (n=16)	16 (n=19)	15.5 (n=15)	8.4 (n=25)

NB: Age and Volunteer vs. Staff are indicated as a percentage of the total number of respondents in that age or work category.

4.4.3 Potential Benefits of Professionalisation

A number of statements were listed representing some attitudes towards making fire and emergency services work a profession. Respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they either agreed or disagree with each of these attitudinal statements.

12. Listed below are some things which some people have said about making fire and emergency service work a profession.

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement, and how strongly.

The statements are listed below in order from those with which the greatest number of people agreed to those with which there was the lowest level of agreement.

	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Partly Agree %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %
There will be an accepted standard for consistent education, training, experience and behaviour	50	36	8	4	2
Recognition of skills and experience of Fire & Emergency Service workers will go up	44	38	9	7	2
It will better prepare the next generation(s) of public safety leaders	37	43	12	6	2
Accountability to the public will be strengthened	36	39	13	8	5
The quality and consistency of services delivered will go up	33	34	19	10	4
The talent pool of Fire & Emergency Service professionals will increase	32	31	24	8	5

The highest level of agreement was with the following statements:

- There will be an accepted standard for consistent education, training, experience and behaviour – 86% ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’
- Recognition of skills and experience of Fire & Emergency Service workers will go up – 82% ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’
- It will better prepare the next generation(s) of public safety leaders – 80% ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’

These results reflect the responses given in the open-ended, verbatim questions. It is also important to note that for each of these three statements between 6-14% of respondents said they ‘disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’.

Somewhat lower, but nonetheless, substantial levels of agreement were found with the following statements:

- Accountability to the public will be strengthened – 75% ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’
- The quality and consistency of services delivered will go up – 67% ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’

- The talent pool of Fire & Emergency Service professionals will increase – 63% ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’

4.4.4 Other Benefits of Professionalisation

Respondents were asked to list any other advantages they saw in turning Fire & Emergency Service work into a profession which had not been listed in Question 12.

Question 13

Do you think there are other advantages of transforming Fire & Emergency Service work into a profession which are not listed above?

Please list any suggestions. (n=108 or 27% listed one or more other advantages)

The most prevalent answers were strongly in line with those given in response to other questions.

- Recognition / recognition of current knowledge and skills / recognition of knowledge and skills of volunteers / better recognition of the skills and experience needed to do the job

“Volunteers are often NOT thought of as ‘professional’, especially within the fire agencies. So respect for volunteers would increase.”

- Improved morale / self-esteem / pride / greater sense of worth / sense of achievement
- Build higher confidence in workers of their own ability and expertise /ability to do the job
- Opportunity to improve knowledge and skills / opportunity to study / for further learning
- More transportable skills / between different agencies / between States / across the Sector

“International and interstate deployments – Agencies requesting assistance would be confident about the accreditation of those personnel being deployed.”

- Better working relationships between agencies / greater inter-agency awareness and collaboration/communication/greater respect
- Better working relationships between paid staff and volunteers / greater respect by staff of volunteers

And to a lesser degree,

- Better platform from which to campaign for better wages and conditions

One particular comment captures a sentiment which perhaps did not arise strongly in any one question but did emerge quietly across a range of questions.

“There is an imbalance of access to training between ‘career’ staff and volunteer and decreased (?) emergency role. This scheme may work towards reducing that imbalance.”

4.5 Perceived Disadvantages to Professionalisation

Respondents were asked to say what they thought were the disadvantages to making Fire & Emergency Service work a profession. This was an open-ended question so that respondents could describe these disadvantages in detail in their own words.

Of the total 403 respondents, 320 or 80% provided an answer to this question. It is possible the remaining 20% did not think there were any disadvantages but this cannot be confirmed. Another 72 respondents or 22% of the total, representing about one in five people, responded to the question by saying they saw 'no disadvantages' of professionalisation.

As such, 155 or 38% in total of all respondents listed no disadvantages.

The remaining 62% of respondents listed at least one potential disadvantage. Given the overall support for professionalisation suggested by the rest of the questionnaire responses, it is important to note that there is reasonably broad concern with possible disadvantages.

Question 14

What do you think are disadvantages to making Fire & Emergency Service work a profession?

The most strongly highlighted disadvantage was:

- The additional time and cost pressures it may place on staff and volunteers
- *Will put more pressure on already stretched services / a greater workload for already stretched staff*
- *Too much work for people getting the qualifications / would require too great a commitment of time and effort from volunteers*
- *Increased costs / cost to agency or organisation*
- *Volunteers are already under too much pressure & this will only increase the pressure even more / the impact and demands on volunteers are already excessive*
- *Cost for volunteers / time / money / increased compliance and registration costs / continuing professional development costs / registration/membership costs*
- *Too much effort for little/no gain*
- *May lose staff/volunteers who consider it all too hard / those not interested in academic study*
- *Will make it harder to get volunteers / all the extra requirements will be an added disincentive to become a volunteer / creates barriers to entry*
- *Make it harder to attract people into the sector / due to a perception of it being bureaucratised / too much hard work*
- *Most volunteers are already professionals in other fields and probably don't want to put the additional effort into also 'professionalising' for a voluntary role as well*
- *Likely to result in older members leaving the service*

The second most strongly highlighted disadvantage was:

- The potential reduction in quality of service delivery due to a shift in focus
- *Possibly reduced service to the community*
- *Focus diverted from core business / Too much time diverted from the important work to this issue / Less time and money on the ground to deliver emergency services / takes funding away from front line service delivery*
- *Increased bureaucracy / Creating a new bureaucracy which uses up funds/resources and creates cushy/admin jobs / self-sustaining industry of admin people which uses resources & delivers no value*
- *Moves too much emphasis from doing the job to attaining paper qualifications / move focus from the practical to the academic / Shifts the emphasis to paper accreditation rather than performance and experience / Devalues practical skills and experience and shifts focus to academic qualifications / a risk of undervaluing practical experience and skills with an emphasis on theory and learning*

- *May begin to attract more academic types rather than those caring people interested in helping the community / will attract different kind of volunteer and/or staff*

A range of other potential disadvantages were also listed but less frequently:

- *Would impact badly on/remove the concept of 'volunteering'*
- *Higher expectations from the community / from government*
- *Professionalism could bring the perception that all ES personnel are all paid*
- *Could disadvantage some people if inadequate RPL is put into place*
- *Might be divisive / between FT firefighters and volunteers / Employee vs volunteer divide will be created*

A number of statements were then listed representing some possible disadvantages of making fire and emergency services work a profession. Respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they either agreed or disagree with each one of these attitudinal statements.

The statements are listed below in order from those with which the greatest number of people agreed to those with which there was the lowest level of agreement.

Question 15.

Listed below are some disadvantages other people have suggested.

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement, and how strongly.

	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Partly Agree %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %
Frustration with paperwork such as collecting Continual Professional Development (CPD) points	17	26	29	24	4
The <u>time</u> it would take to do what is required to meet the requirements of Professionalisation eg. Obtain qualification, certification, doing ongoing professional development	12	26	29	27	6
The <u>cost</u> to become a professional and stay a professional might be too high eg. Association membership, cost of ongoing professional development (workshop, courses, seminars)	14	19	36	28	3
Could reduce the flexibility in my employment	5	14	25	50	6
There is no benefit for me	8	7	12	42	31

Many respondents (71%) agreed, at least partly, that a disadvantage of professionalisation would be 'Frustration with paperwork such as collecting Continual Professional Development (CPD) points'.

Two-thirds (66%) agreed, at least partly, that a disadvantage of professionalisation would be 'The time it would take to do what is required to meet the requirements of Professionalisation eg. Obtain qualification, certification, doing ongoing professional development'. The level of agreement with this statement reflects verbatim responses across the entire survey.

Just over two-thirds (69%) agreed, at least partly, that a disadvantage of professionalisation would be 'The cost to become a professional and stay a professional might be too high'. Again, the level of agreement with this statement reflects responses across the rest of the survey.

A total of 43% agreed to some extent the flexibility of their employment might be affected.

And 27% agreed to some extent that 'there is no benefit for me'. It has already been noted that those in the older age groups and volunteers are more likely to express this sentiment. Additionally, concerns about additional time commitments, to some extent, counteract perceptions of benefits.

4.6 Anticipated Career Progression from Certification

A question was posed asking the rating respondents would give to the chance their career in Fire & Emergency Services would progress as a result of being certified as a Fire & Emergency Service professional?

A fifth (21%) said the question was 'not applicable' to them. This may have been a result of several issues. Those indicated through verbatim responses to other questions are:

- in the latter part of their working life/nearing retirement
- see themselves as volunteers and not seeking a career
- staff person not seeking a career or career progression
- career progression not relevant to their role

When this group is taken out of the results for this question, just under a third (30%) of respondents rated the chance of their career progressing as 'low' (looking at those for whom career progress is applicable).

A total of 70% rated the chance of their career progressing as 'high' or 'very high'.

Question 16. What rating would you give to the chance your career in Fire & Emergency Services would progress as a result of being certified as a Fire & Emergency Service professional?

	Total	n	Career
Low	25%	96	30%
High	32%	126	41%
Very High	23%	88	29%
Not	21%	81	

Females were more likely to rate the chances of their career progressing as 'very high'. However, this difference was not statistically significant.

Those in the younger age group of 25-40 years were more likely to rate the chances as 'very high'. Conversely, those in the 51+ age group were more likely to rate the chances of their career progressing as 'low' (44%). This difference was statistically significant as was the difference between these groups with regard to saying the chances were 'very high' ie., those in the older age group of 51+ years were much less likely to say the chances of their career progressing was very high as a result of certification. The reasons for this have already been discussed. In short they relate to attitudes to learning, the older age group being closer to the latter part of their career/nearing retirement and also the fact/belief they have substantial experience and qualifications on which their merit can be assessed.

Volunteers were more polarised than staff on this issue, being more likely to say the chances were 'low' but also more likely to say the chances were 'high'. However, these differences between volunteers and staff were not statistically significant, suggesting that volunteers and staff tend to see their chances of career progression as a result of certification to be very similar.

	Total %	Gender %		Age %				Volunteer or Staff %	
		F	M	<25 years	25-40 years	41-50 years	51+ years	Volunteer	Staff
Low	30	26	31	0	18	32	44	35	29
High	41	35	42	50	39	42	40	29	43
Very High	29	39	28	50	42	26	16	35	28
n=	403	70	333	8*	127	149	119	97	298

Respondents were asked to comment on their reasons for their ratings of their career progression as a result of professionalisation.

Question 17

Please add a comment to explain your response to the above question. (n=360)

A range of reasons were provided for why people thought there were good chances that professionalisation would progress their careers.

- *Would improve chances of moving interstate / better movement between agencies / improve chances of moving overseas*
- *help me move from volunteer to paid position*
- *recognises the skills and experience I have already*
- *increased skills and knowledge*

Some suggested other factors posed significant barriers in their career progression.

- *few/no opportunities for advancement given the agency structure / my organisation is all volunteers with no paid staff / my lack of operational service / I don't find the available positions attractive / no defined career path for volunteers which depends on qualifications / I am already at a senior level / no higher positions available*
- *As a volunteer it is difficult to complete with paid staff who will be given the time and money to do the training/continuing prof devt as I will have to fund my own and do it in my own time*

- *I am a volunteer/volunteer only (NFI)*

A proportion of respondents indicated that they felt professionalisation would not deliver benefits and some provided the reasons why.

- *My skills/qualifications/existing memberships allow for career progression*
- *No faith that certification will deliver any benefits / don't believe as a volunteer I would receive the support necessary to meet the criteria to become certified*
- *Certification won't change existing culture of 'its not what you know, its who you know' / old school tie*
- *Will have NO impact for me (NFI)*

A proportion of people made comments indicating that career progression was not relevant to them. Some provided reasons why.

- *not relevant to me (NFI)*
- *This is not my career / volunteerism is not a career / I don't see my volunteering as a career*
- *I am close to retirement/hearing end of my career (NFI)*
- *Career advancement is not a priority / I am not interested in career advancement / I am satisfied with my current career standing*

Lastly, a proportion of respondents chose not to comment or indicated they were not sure.

- *No comment / no answer provided / not sure*

4.7 Interest in Professionalisation Scheme Participation

To forecast the potential level of participation in a Professionalisation Scheme, a question was asked specifically on this issue.

Question 18. Would you participate in a Professionalisation Scheme?

Yes	72%	281
No	9%	35
Not sure	19%	76

Almost three-quarters of respondents (72%) said 'yes' they would participate. This degree of agreement reflects the degree of positive response to other questions in the survey. For example 82% agreed earlier that F&ES should be a recognised and certified profession. The disparity between the levels of agreement between these two questions is very interesting. More people believe in the need for professionalisation than those who say they would be prepared to participate. The disparity is about 10% who believe in professionalisation but wouldn't participate. There are likely to be many reasons for this.

Those in the older age groups most likely comprise a segment of this group of 'supporters/non-participants'. Similarly, volunteers are more likely to fall into this group. The lower level of forecast participation most likely reflects concerns about the time commitment to participate, the

difficulty of participating eg., difficult paperwork to complete and perhaps a belief that it relates primarily to staff rather than volunteers.

Almost one in five (19%) indicated they were 'not sure' if they would participate. Just under one in ten (9%) said 'no' they would not participate.

Males were more likely to say they would participate (74%) although this was not statistically significantly different to the result for females. However, what was statistically significantly different was the fact that females were more likely than males to say they were 'not sure' if they would participate. This is an interesting result given that females earlier were more likely to rate their chances of career progression as very high as a result of professionalisation. These results are of some concern. It could be hypothesised that perceptions of the time commitments and difficulty of participating in a professionalisation scheme weigh more heavily with females and that as a result, any such scheme needs to be cognisant of this in order to ensure equal opportunity for women to participate in the scheme.

Those in the 25-40 age group were more likely to say they would participate (83%) than those in the 51+ age group (60), and conversely few in the 25-40 group (3%) said 'no' to participation vs the 51+ group (18%). Both of these results were statistically significant, confirming a range of results in this survey suggesting a Professionalisation Scheme is not personally relevant to a proportion of the 51+ age group.

Staff were more likely to say 'yes' they would participate (76%) than volunteers (statistically significant). Volunteers were more likely to say they were 'unsure' whether they would participate (26%) (but not statistically significantly so). Again, this result reflects other results across the survey which suggest somewhat more staff consider professionalisation personally relevant.

	Total %	Gender %		Age %				Volunteer or Staff %	
		F	M	<25 years	25-40 years	41-50 years	51+ years	Volunteer	Staff
Yes	72	66	74	88	83	72	60	61	76
No	9	6	9	0	3	7	18	13	7
Not sure	19	29	17	12	13	21	22	26	17
n=	403	70	333	8*	127	149	119	97	298

Respondents were said 'no' or 'not sure' if they would participate in a Professionalisation Scheme were then asked to describe their reasons.

The responses again reflect those provided to other questions in the survey. In addition, many of those who said they were 'not sure' indicated that they needed more information about such a scheme and its benefits, including to themselves, in order to make a decision about their possible participation.

Q18 would you participate in a Prof Scheme?
Question 18.1 If no, please explain why: (n=35)

All of the responses provided were in the following categories.

- *Too close to retirement*

- *Already have quals and training I need*
- *Don't need it to prove my capability*
- *My career/business is in another area / not interested in putting time getting quals in this area as well*
- *As a volunteer not interested in putting in the extra time it would require / I don't have time / entails commitments in which I have no interest*
- *Runs counter to the concept of volunteerism*
- *Don't see any benefit in it for me/ doesn't improve how I do the job*
- *Wouldn't improve the service I deliver*

"I am a land manager who is a professional forester. I gain the respect for my capability from actions not from training and certification."

"I am a volunteer. I have a profession that I work in now. I would gain nothing from pursuing this path except for losing more personal time."

Q18 Would you participate in a Professionalisation Scheme?

Question 18.2 If not sure, please explain why: (n=76)

Similar reasons were given by those who were not sure if they would participate.

- *Would need more information/detail about it eg what benefit would it provide/ the cost / what it would involve /what would be the requirements /required time commitments / Not enough info on which to make a decision*
- *Not sure it would be of any great benefit to me /not sure the benefits to me*
- *Don't want to re-train / do more training / provide more evidence of skills*
- *It would entail too much work/effort*
- *Getting towards end of career/towards retirement*

"As a volunteer I have my own career to focus on."

4.8 Motivations for Participation in Professionalisation Scheme

4.8.1 Motivations for Participation – Unprompted

Information was sought on what would motivate workers to participate in a Fire & Emergency Service Professionalisation Scheme.

Question 19

What would motivate you to participate in a Fire & Emergency Service Professionalisation Scheme?

The responses provided strongly reflected the results of previous questions. As such it is not surprising that some respondents chose to answer with 'refer to my answers to previous questions'.

The most prevalent answers, unsurprisingly related to recognition.

- *Being recognised as a professional in my field of expertise / recognition / recognition of skills / recognition of qualifications by other industries /across agencies / interstate/ international*

This issue of recognition has proved a strong theme across this survey suggesting that there is currently a strong need for recognition within the F&ES sector. This issue is an organisational issue, and one which needs to be addressed whether a Professionalisation Scheme is introduced or not.

The second most prevalent answers related to specific benefits to the individual worker and then thirdly, benefit to the community via delivery of best possible service.

- *Personal development /self-improvement*
- *Build knowledge and skills/desire to enhance my skills and knowledge/opportunity to learn*
- *Career advancement opportunities / career pathway / improved career prospects*
- *Transferable / transportable qualifications /nationally / across agencies*
- *Money/Cash/financial gain/salary increase*
- *To be better at my job / to be the best I can be at what I do /to best serve the community*
- *Improvement in industry service levels*

In addition, attributes of the scheme were noted as motivations.

- *Clearly communicated scheme including benefits to participants and to the community / how it would work / inclusion of RPL*
- *Well-structured scheme /ease of process/ reasonable time commitments*
- *More professionally delivered training*
- *Financial and time support from my dept*
- *If it was a pre-requisite for particular roles*

A small number of respondents (12 or 3%) said 'nothing' would motivate them to participate - or noted 'extreme' forms of motivation!

“Electrocution.”

“A miracle!”

Conversely, a small number of respondents indicated they would not need any motivation. They would participate anyway. Some of these noted simply that they thought it was a great idea or opportunity.

- *I don't need any motivation / would participate anyway / already motivated*

4.8.2 Motivations for Participation – Prompted

Respondents were then presented with a list of possible motivations for participating in a Fire & Emergency Service Professionalisation Scheme and asked to rate each one for how important it was to them.

Question 20

Listed below are some **motivations** other people have suggested for participating in a Fire & Emergency Service Professionalisation Scheme. How important are they to you?

The statements have been listed below with those having the highest number of respondents rating them as 'extremely important' or 'very important'.

Unsurprisingly, in accord with the responses from other questions, recognition arises as the strongest motivation. The top three statements all reflect this issue.

The issue of belonging to a network of peers was rated as at least 'quite important' by 74% of respondents, suggesting that, whilst it has not been mentioned by large numbers of respondents in other questions, when prompted, it is actually important.

Career advancement too is rated as at least 'quite important' by 68% of respondents, again reflecting the responses to other questions.

	Extremely Important %	Very Important %	Quite Important %	Not Very Important %	Not At All Important %
It would provide me with recognised professional status within Fire & Emergency Service & the community	20	36	24	12	8
It would validate my personal & professional capability	21	34	28	10	7
It would provide me with recognised status amongst other professions	17	36	22	16	9
It would mean that I belong to a network of peers	16	27	30	14	12
It would advance my career prospects	8	29	30	22	10

4.9 Perceived Barriers to Successful Professionalisation

4.9.1 Main Barriers

Respondent views were sought as to the main barriers to the introduction of a successful Professionalisation Scheme. Whilst many listed barriers, most listed concerns they had about the scheme.

Question 21

What do you think are the main barriers to introducing a successful Professionalisation Scheme?

By far the most prevalent responses related to the cost and time commitments required by such a scheme.

The anticipated nature of the scheme itself was listed as a concern particularly the potential complexity of the scheme.

Thirdly, barriers were noted with regard to obtaining agreement and acceptance of the scheme by staff and volunteers, unions and across states and ES groups/sectors.

A barrier was noted with regards to the diversity of the field which needed to be covered.

- *Cost /money/who is going to pay for it/cost to organisations/cost to individuals*
- *Time / for individuals to attend training / organisations need to put in to run the scheme / increased workload / current work commitments /volunteers in particular having enough time to participate*
- *Bureaucracy / red tape /paperwork*
- *The nature of the scheme itself /over complexity*
- *Poor management/implementation of the scheme*
- *Acceptance by staff / acceptance by members /resistance to change /fear of change / willingness to participate/resistance among specific groups/acceptance by volunteers*
- *Apathy / complacency*
- *Unions /industrial relations*
- *Getting agreement between states/agreement on standards/requirements / achieving consistency across all ES groups*
- *The complexity and diverse range of technical areas of expertise which need to be covered*

Fourteen respondents did not provide an answer to this question. Twelve said they were 'unsure/don't know' and seven said they saw 'no barriers'.

- *Unsure/not sure*
- *None / no barriers*

4.9.2 Overcoming the Barriers

After the question on potential barriers, a follow-up question was asked regarding how these barriers might be overcome.

Question 22

How might these barriers be overcome?

A total of 321 or 80% of people responded to this question. Another 28 or 7% said 'don't know' or 'not sure'.

The most prevalent responses related to the way in which the scheme is implemented, with a strong focus on consultation and communications.

- *Widespread consultation / early and honest consultation / consultation with key stakeholders including unions, government and agencies*
- *Get union support*
- *Commitment by member agencies*
- *Get volunteers support*
- *Communications / Awareness campaign / explain benefits / education*
- *Time / roll the program out over a period of years / staged roll out of the scheme*

“Early, open and honest consultation.”

“Have clear and transparent processes – take time.”

“Appropriate change management and education strategies.”

“Soothe, pacify, cajole but press ahead regardless.”

“Gutta cavat lapidem.” A drop hollows out the stone.

The second most prevalent responses related to:

- *Money / funding / budget*

Once again, specific attributes of the scheme were noted.

- *A good RPL program*
- *Keep it simple / make administration of scheme easy*
- *Make it flexible*

4.10 Suggested Professionalisation Scheme Attributes

The attributes a Fire & Emergency Services Professionalisation Scheme should include.

Question 23

What do you think any Fire & Emergency Services Professionalisation Scheme should include?

This question was interpreted in a range of different ways. Some respondents suggested specific training modules, and others mentioned broader attributes such as RPL including recognition of prior experience and skills, and a Code of Conduct. Others noted the need for training to be consistent including across the country and for the scheme to have structured pathways for career progression.

The results of this question are best analysed at a detailed level at a later date as part of the specific design of any Professionalisation Scheme.

4.11 Other Comments

Finally, other thoughts on professionalisation or any other issue of importance were sought. A total of 190 or 47% of respondents chose to reply to this question.

Question 24

Please tell us any other thoughts you have on professionalisation or any other issue of importance to you. (n=190)

Responses fell into four categories:

- General comments supportive of the scheme eg., *'it's a marvellous thing', 'sector screaming out for this', 'great initiative', 'great idea'*
- General comments unsupportive of scheme eg., *'don't need it'*
- Other comments on the scheme, which tended to reiterate what had already been covered eg.,
 - *Need for consistency across agencies/states*
 - *Importance of RPL*
 - *May cause exodus of members*
 - *Can't lose sight of the main picture which is to help people*
 - *We are very professional already*
 - *'be careful not to confuse bits of paper (qualifications) with the ability of the person to do the job under real life situations'*
 - *Unions will not support*
 - *Must be accessible to all*
- Other comments - issues other than the scheme - very few of these comments
 - *'we need more Indians and less chiefs'*
 - *Need an end to discrimination and for true EIO*
 - *'the barriers between the paid emergency staff and volunteers is HUGE.'*

Appendix 2 – Consultation Methodology

AFAC member agencies were invited to participate in the consultation process which involved a number of options:

Online Survey

An online survey was conducted using the Cvent Event, survey & e-marketing solutions tool. The survey was primarily targeted at the 35 AFAC Member agencies, including both staff and volunteers; however, it was open to other key stakeholders.

AFAC member agencies were asked to promote the survey within their organisations as deemed appropriate.

The survey was made available from a link on the AFAC Knowledge Web and launched on Tuesday 31st May. By the time the survey closed in early August 2011, some 520 people had begun to take the survey, and of these, 403 had completed it. The survey questionnaire is shown in Annex A.

Focus Groups

22 focus groups were conducted, with the interviews carried out by AFAC personnel. Focus groups consisted of up to 16 individuals with a known interest and expertise in fire and emergency management. In some cases they were field practitioners, and in others policy makers, administrators and managers. A total

of 181 personnel participated in the focus groups.

A focus group guide was used to manage the focus groups, along with an abridged version of the online survey. The guide is included as Annex B.

Discussions lasted from between one and a half and two hours. The summary and list of participants is shown in Annex C.

Written Submissions

Written submissions could also be made if individuals or agencies wished to use this option. Instructions were given so that the submissions covered the five key questions being asked.

Meetings with Key Stakeholders

AFAC personnel met with representatives of other organisations and key stakeholder bodies that have an interest in this topic.

These meetings were intended to provide an overview of this concept and explain the intentions of the consultation process.

Meetings were conducted in person and by phone and took between 30 minutes and two hours. The list of key stakeholders is shown in Annex D.

Annex A – On-line Survey Questionnaire

Summary of Online Survey

Professionalisation Scheme Survey:

- Started – 520
- Completed – 403

Professionalisation Survey

Welcome

AFAC Council at its April 2011 meeting agreed to undertake preliminary consultation within its member agencies and key stakeholders. The consultation is designed to determine:

- Stakeholder views on the need for a Fire and Emergency Service Professionalisation Scheme, &
- The degree to which there is a willingness by the sector to engage in such a Scheme.

It is important to note that fire and emergency service work is already highly respected in the community and by all those who work in the sector. Fire and emergency service workers are extremely professional in their approach to supporting their communities and each other. Considering a Professionalisation Scheme seeks to formally recognise the valuable contribution they make to public safety.

As well as explaining what is meant by a Professionalisation Scheme this consultation will be seeking input on why such a Scheme might be needed. Also, importantly the consultation seeks to obtain views on the following questions:

1. Do you think that fire and emergency service work should be an officially recognised and certified profession? If so, how important is this?
2. What opportunities and benefits do you believe you would get from such a Scheme?
3. How do you think it would benefit the community?
4. How would it assist the Sector into the future?
5. What are the barriers to a successful Scheme? How might they be overcome?

We value your contribution and comments and would be grateful if you could take the time to complete this survey. It should take you about 15 minutes.

The results of the survey will be compiled and made available on the AFAC Knowledge Web for you to review.

Again, thank you for your time and valuable contribution. If you would like more information or to discuss anything further, you are welcome to contact us.

Naomi Brown
AFAC CEO

Tell us a little about yourself...

1. Are you (please select one):
 - Female
 - Male
2. Which age category do you belong to? (please select one)
 - Less than 25 years
 - 25-40 years
 - 41-50 years
 - 51 years and over
3. Where is your place of work? (please select one)
 - Australian Capital Territory
 - New South Wales
 - New Zealand
 - Northern Territory
 - Queensland
 - South Australia
 - Tasmania
 - Victoria
 - Western Australia
 - None of the above (please describe)
4. Are you a volunteer or staff member of an AFAC Member Agency?
 - Volunteer
 - Staff member
 - Neither (please describe)

5. Which one of the categories below best describes the area of Fire & Emergency Service work you are most involved in? (please select one)

- Emergency management
- Firefighter/Emergency service worker
- Technical specialist
- Policy/Research
- Other (please describe)

6. Which type of agency are you with? (please select one)

- Land Management
- Fire and Rescue
- Emergency Services
- Rural/Bushfire Service
- Other (please describe)

7. What is the highest level public safety qualification you have?

Open this link to view the Public Safety Training Package:

http://www.governmentskills.com.au/industry.php?industry_id=3

- Certificate II
- Certificate III
- Certificate IV
- Diploma
- Advanced Diploma
- Vocational Graduate Certificate
- Graduate Diploma
- None
- Other (please describe)

8. How important is it to you to attain a higher level of education in public safety? (please rank the level of importance to you)

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Quite important
- Not very important
- Not at all important

Why professionalise Fire & Emergency Service work?

Some jobs in society are professions e.g. doctors, accountants. Professions are characterised by three things;

- the person doing the job has a qualification in that area,
- the person is a member of a professional association and thus certified by the

association as a professional in that area, and

- the person is involved in continual professional development (CPD) in that profession e.g. workshops, seminars etc. to ensure that they keep up to date with skills in their profession.

A Professionalisation Scheme means putting into place a scheme for making an area of work a 'profession' or in other words recognising people who work in the area as 'professionals'. It is now being considered whether there is a need for fire and emergency service work to be an officially recognised and certified profession.

9. Do you think that Fire & Emergency Service work should be a recognised and certified Profession?

- Yes (Answer question number 9.2.)
- No (Answer question number 9.1.)
- Not sure (Answer question number 9.3.)

9.1. If no, please explain why:

9.2. If yes, how important is it to you that there is a Fire & Emergency Services Professionalisation Scheme? (please rank the level of importance to you)

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Quite important
- Not very important
- Not at all important

9.3. If not sure, please explain why:

10. How do you think that a Fire & Emergency Services Professionalisation Scheme would benefit the community?

11. What opportunities and benefits do you think you yourself would get from such a Scheme?

12. Listed below are some things which some people have said about making fire and emergency service work a profession. (please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement, and how strongly – Strongly agree, Agree, partly agree, Disagree, Strongly disagree)

- There will be an accepted standard for consistent education, training, experience and behaviour
- Accountability to the public will be strengthened
- The quality and consistency of services delivered will go up
- It will better prepare the next generation(s) of public safety leaders
- Recognition of skills and experience of Fire & Emergency Service workers will go up
- The talent pool of Fire & Emergency Service professionals will increase

13. Do you think there are other advantages of transforming Fire & Emergency Service work into a profession which are not listed above?
(please list any suggestions below, leave blank if you have no further suggestions)

14. What do you think are disadvantages to making Fire & Emergency Service work a profession?

15. Listed below are some disadvantages other people have suggested. (please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement, and how strongly – Strongly agree, Agree, partly agree, Disagree, Strongly disagree)

- Could reduce the flexibility in my employment
- The time it would take to do what is required to meet the requirements of Professionalisation e.g. Obtain qualification, certification, doing ongoing professional development
- The cost to become a professional and stay a professional might be too high e.g. Association membership, cost of ongoing professional development (workshop, courses, seminars)
- Frustration with paperwork such as collecting Continual Professional Development (CPD) points
- There is no benefit for me

16. What rating would you give to the chance your career in Fire & Emergency Services would progress as a result of being certified as a Fire & Emergency Service professional?
(please select one)

- Low
- High
- Very High

17. Please add a comment to explain your response to the above question.

18. Would you participate in a Professionalisation Scheme?

- Yes
- No (Answer question number 18.1.)
- Not sure (Answer question number 18.2.)

18.1 If no, please explain why:

18.2 If not sure, please explain why:

19. What would motivate you to participate in a Fire & Emergency Service Professionalisation Scheme?

20. Listed below are some motivations other people have suggested for participating in a Fire & Emergency Service Professionalisation Scheme. How important are they to you? (please rank each on its level of importance to you – Extremely important, Very important, Quite important, Not very important, Not at all important)

- It would advance my career prospects
- It would validate my personal & professional capability
- It would provide me with recognised professional status within Fire & Emergency Service & the community
- It would mean that I belong to a network of peers
- It would provide me with recognised status amongst other professions

21. What do you think are the main barriers to introducing a successful Professionalisation Scheme?

22. How might these barriers be overcome?

23. What do you think any Fire & Emergency Services Professionalisation Scheme should include?

24. Please tell us any other thoughts you have on professionalisation or any other issue of importance to you.

Thank you

Thank you for completing the AFAC Professionalisation Scheme survey! We value your feedback and appreciate your time.

Do you still have questions on the AFAC Professionalisation Scheme and how it relates to your career or organisation? Information sheets are available here (www.afac-kw.com.au/professionalisation).

Annex B: Focus Group Guide

AFAC Professionalisation Scheme
Consultation Process: Focus group and meeting guide:

- *Bring together 8-15 people with common features (i.e. all entry level, or frontline service providers, or HR/Managerial level)*
- *Allow 1.5 – 2 hours for the session*
- *Provide refreshments where possible*

Running the focus groups and meetings helps interpret the data coming from the online survey. It is not necessary to have statistically significant numbers from the focus groups and meetings; but important to make sure the range of views is sampled with an appropriate male/female split. It is ok to modify the approach to the focus groups and meetings based on practical experience; it is good practice to do this.

Before the Session

- Encourage participants to complete the on-line survey and read the explanatory information on the website.
- Request full participant list and job titles from agency representative nominated to manage the agency's participation in the consultation process.

Conducting the Session

- Be interested, but not leading.
- Important to make people feel like they're having a good chat.
- Keep it relaxed and fun, but focused on the reason why they're there.
- Let the conversation follow the threads if it is consistent with the topic. Pull it back if not.
- Look for opportunities to introduce the new subject areas – it is better if the conversation flows that way rather than being stage-managed.
- Be careful about your own body language, particularly when scribing – don't make it obvious when taking notes.
- If there is a dominant character, start directing the rest of group.

Capturing the information during the Session

- Use a shorter version of the survey questionnaire to allow participants time to write down some of their thoughts. Focus on the main qualitative questions and it's easier to capture views. (These can be distributed through the session.)
- Recording the entire session can make sure everything is captured.

Tools and tactics

- A3 size boards with key definitions on them and displayed around the room are helpful.
- Introduce workshop techniques if the group could benefit from that. Using butchers paper or whiteboards. It's helpful to keep people engaged and feeling valued.
- Make sure to use open-ended questions; prompted and unprompted.

Agenda Outline (Refer below for further detail)

- Set the context – why are they there.
- Introduce all the details and how the session will work.
- Reassure them we will stick to time; ensuring the end time is clear.
- Clarify the use of the recorder if on.

After the Session

Write up notes straight away; capture as much as possible while its fresh.

- Debrief together (AFAC staff).
- Debrief with the host agency; particularly if other issues were raised that they need to follow up on.
- Share summary notes of the group to the agency representative post-session.

Session Agenda

- Introductions first; host agency to introduce Jill and Claire or Jill to do the introductions.
- Get everyone else to introduce themselves professionally and talk a little about themselves personally.
- Outline how the session will work:
 - No right or wrong answers; just individual opinions
 - Chatting amongst each other

- OK to ask each other questions and clarify opinions
- Go through a series of questions to explore opinions – starting with the questionnaire.
- Introductory remarks – facilitator to set the context
- Open up for questions and comments – explore knowledge of what people think professionalisation is:
 - May need to use the boards and examples to aid understanding (4-5 max)
- Do the short version questionnaire
 - Discuss the questions on the short version questionnaire
- Discuss (post-its)
 - How do you think it would benefit the community?
- Discuss (whiteboard)
 - What are the barriers to a successful scheme? How might they be overcome?
- Discuss (whiteboard)
 - Where would we start? Why?
- Spend a couple of minutes to go back to the questionnaire and adjust any answers if they need to.
- At the end provide an opportunity to cover off anything else that they may wish to say or feedback on other issues that have come to mind during the discussions. (Feed this back to host agency.)
- Also note if they think of anything afterwards to feel free to email us.
- Outline what the next steps are and how they can keep up with what is happening
 - Collect all the questionnaires – they will be collated and analysed
 - Feedback to host agency
 - Survey analysed and report prepared and presented to Council in August
 - Results published on the Knowledge Web.

Annex C: Focus Group Summary

Consultation Summary Table					
State	Total # of Groups	Organisations Involved	Total # of Participants	Component of Staff	Component of Volunteers
Australian Capital Territory	1	* ACT Emergency Services Agency * ACT Fire Brigade * ACT State Emergency Service * ACT State Emergency Service Volunteer Association	12	11 (1 was both)	1
New South Wales	2	* NSW Rural Fire Service * Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW	22	19 (2 were both)	3
New Zealand	2	* New Zealand Fire Service	20	18 (1 was both)	2
Northern Territory	1	* Northern Territory Fire and Rescue Service	11	11	0
Queensland	1	* Dept. of Community Safety Queensland Government - Queensland Fire & Rescue Service	13	13	0
South Australia	2	* Country Fire Service, South Australia * Country Fire Service Volunteers Association (CFSVA) * South Australian State Emergency Service	11	1 (1 was both)	10
Tasmania	1	* Dept. Premier and Cabinet * Forestry Tasmania * Tasmania Fire Service * Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service * Tasmania State Emergency Service	9	9	0
Victoria	5	* Country Fire Authority, Victoria * Department of Sustainability & Environment, Victoria * Metropolitan Fire & Emergency Services Board, Melbourne * Victoria State Emergency Service * Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria (VFBV)	43	37 (3 were both)	6
Western Australia	6	* Bushfire Association WA * Department of Environment & Conservation, Western Australia * Fire & Emergency Services Authority of Western Australia * Institute of Fire Engineers * SES Volunteer Association * United Firefighters Union Australia – Western Australia Branch * Volunteer Fire & Rescue Service Association WA * Volunteer Marine Rescue WA Association * Western Australian Local Government Association	30	26 (1 was both)	4
AFAC Groups	1	* Workforce Management Group	10	10	0
TOTAL FOCUS GROUPS	22	19 AFAC Member Agencies 12 Other 1 AFAC Group	181	155 (85.6% of respondents)	26 (14.4% of respondents)

Annex C: Focus Groups Conducted

Participants		Organisation	Job Title	Date	Location		
Given Name	Surname						
David	Allan	NSW Rural Fire Service (NSWRFS)	Volunteer	1 July 2011	Professional Development Centre at Charles Sturt University NSW		
Bill	Britt	NSW Rural Fire Service (NSWRFS)	L & D Officer				
Len	Carter	NSW Rural Fire Service (NSWRFS)	Volunteer				
Kim	Ferguson	NSW Rural Fire Service (NSWRFS)	Volunteer				
Stephen	Glassock	NSW Rural Fire Service (NSWRFS)	Manager, Learning and Development Systems				
Brett	Hagan	NSW Rural Fire Service (NSWRFS)	L & D Officer				
Danielle	Byrnes	Metropolitan Fire & Emergency Services Board, Melbourne (MFB)	Executive Director - People and Culture	6 July 2011	AFAC Offices, East Melbourne VIC		
Paul	Garvey	Country Fire Authority, Victoria (CFA)	Executive Manager HR				
Judy	Gouldbourn	Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFAC)	HR Manager				
Darren	Hursdell	Fire & Rescue NSW (FRNSW)	Director Human Resources				
Narelle	Koteff	NSW Rural Fire Service (NSWRFS)	Manager Volunteer Relations				
Iain	Mackenzie	Department of Community Safety, QLD - Queensland Fire & Rescue Service (DCS - QFRS)	Deputy Commissioner				
Pam	Markham-Barrett	New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS)	Manager Remuneration and Organisational Development				
Frank	Pasquale	Fire & Emergency Services Authority of Western Australia (FESA)	Executive Director Corporate Services				
Robyn	Pearce	Tasmania Fire Service (TFS)	Director Human Resources				
David	Rae	NSW State Emergency Service (NSW SES)	Director Human Services				
Ian	Carlton	Victoria State Emergency Service (VIC SES)	Regional Officer (Emergency Management)			7 July 2011	VIC SES Headquarters, Southbank VIC
Mark	Cattell	Victoria State Emergency Service (VIC SES)	Manager Operational Readiness				

Susan	Fayers	Victoria Emergency (VIC SES)	State Service	EM Support Officer		
Cherry	Harrop	Victoria Emergency (VIC SES)	State Service	Emergency Management Planning and Advice Officer		
Ray	Jasper	Victoria Emergency (VIC SES)	State Service	Regional Manager, Central		
Lana	Rajsic	Victoria Emergency (VIC SES)	State Service	HR		
Clint	Saarinen	Victoria Emergency (VIC SES)	State Service	Regional Manager, East Region		
Leanne	Simpson	Victoria Emergency (VIC SES)	State Service	Manager Operational Performance		
Katrina	Bahen	Victoria Emergency (VIC SES)	State Service	Director Human Resources	7 July 2011	VIC SES Headquarters, Southbank VIC
Phil	Glover	Victoria Emergency (VIC SES)	State Service	Unit Controller		
John	Hennessy	Victoria Emergency (VIC SES)	State Service	Unit Controller		
Gavin	Kelly	Victoria Emergency (VIC SES)	State Service	Regional Officer (Emergency Management)		
Keith	O'Brien	Victoria Emergency (VIC SES)	State Service	Regional Manager, North East Region		
Jane	Ardasinski	Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW		Learning and Development Officer	12 July 2011	Level 1, Valentine Street, Parramatta NSW
Craig	Arms	Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW		Branch Operations Officer		
Neil	Benjamin	Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW		Regional Administration officer		
Julie	Bourne	Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW		Branch Operations Officer		
Tia	Christionson	Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW		Branch Operations Officer		
Debbie	Colbourne	Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW		Business Operations Officer		
Simon	Hemmer	Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW		Branch Operations Manger		
Carl	Hollis	Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW		State Operations Manager		
Jennifer	Kingston	Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW		Branch Operations Officer		
Robin	Mares	Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW		Regional Fire Management Officer		
Donald	McDonald	Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW		Regional Fire Management Officer		
Steve	Mossfield	Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW		Branch Operations Manger		
Phil	Pringure	Office of Environment		DSE, VIC		

		and Heritage, NSW			
Jan	Shankster	Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW	Regional Administration officer		
Clair	Windle	Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW	Regional Administration officer		
Richard	Yeomans	Office of Environment and Heritage, NSW	Branch Operations Officer		
Brad	Barton	Department of Environment & Conservation, Western Australia (DEC WA)	Regional Leader, Nature Conservation	13 July 2011	DEC WA Offices, Kensington WA
Mike	Cantelo	Department of Environment & Conservation, Western Australia (DEC WA)	District Fire Coordinator		
Murray	Carter	Department of Environment & Conservation, Western Australia (DEC WA)	Manager Fire Management Services Branch		
Brad	Commins	Department of Environment & Conservation, Western Australia (DEC WA)	Operations Manager		
Stefan	de Haan	Department of Environment & Conservation, Western Australia (DEC WA)	District Manager		
Kelly	Gillen	Department of Environment & Conservation, Western Australia (DEC WA)	Assistant Director Regional Services		
Trevor	Howard	Department of Environment & Conservation, Western Australia (DEC WA)	Rangelands Fire Management Officer		
George	Laws	Department of Environment & Conservation, Western Australia (DEC WA)	Conservation Employee Training		
Keith	Low	Department of Environment & Conservation, Western Australia (DEC WA)	Senior Policy Officer		
Murray	Mitchell	Department of Environment & Conservation, Western Australia (DEC WA)	Fire Operations Officer		
David	Rawet	Department of Environment & Conservation, Western Australia (DEC WA)	Senior Education & Development Officer		

Paul	Carr	Fire & Services Western (FESA)	Emergency Authority of Australia	Manager Community Engagement Services	14 July 2011	FESA Perth WA	House
Mal	Cronstedt	Fire & Services Western (FESA)	Emergency Authority of Australia	Rural Operations Coordinator Country South Operations			
Merveen	Cross	Fire & Services Western (FESA)	Emergency Authority of Australia	Acting Executive Officer - Office of CEO & Executive Services			
David	Evenis	Fire & Services Western (FESA)	Emergency Authority of Australia	Manager - Training & Development Forrestfield Training Centre			
Gary	Gifford	Fire & Services Western (FESA)	Emergency Authority of Australia	Assistant Chief Operations Officer - Metropolitan SES			
Steve	Johnston	Fire & Services Western (FESA)	Emergency Authority of Australia	Superintendent Manager Special Risks - Operations Coordinator			
Frank	Pasquale	Fire & Services Western (FESA)	Emergency Authority of Australia	Executive Director Corporate Services			
Lea	Anderson	United Firefighters Union Australia - Western Branch	Firefighters Australia - Australia	Industrial Officer	14 July 2011	FESA Perth WA	House
Graeme	Geer	United Firefighters Union Australia - Western Branch	Firefighters Australia - Australia	Secretary			
Kevin	Jolly	United Firefighters Union Australia - Western Branch	Firefighters Australia - Australia	President			
Gary	Eglinton	Institute of Fire Engineers	of Fire	VP of National Branch, President of WA Branch	14 July 2011	FESA Perth WA	House
John	Peterson	Institute of Fire Engineers	of Fire				
Ted	Tait	Institute of Fire Engineers	of Fire	Treasurer of IFE, also Station Officer Osborne Park Fire Station (FESA)			
Annique	Gray	Fire & Services Western (FESA)	Emergency Authority of Australia	Exec Officer for Emergency Services, SES and VFS	15 July 2011	FESA Perth WA	House
Neil	Hawkins	Fire & Services Western (FESA)	Emergency Authority of Australia	President of Metro Zone - Volunteer Fire & Rescue Service Association WA			
Phil	Nicholls	Fire & Services Western (FESA)	Emergency Authority of Australia	State Commander - Volunteer Marine Rescue WA Association			

David	Price	Fire & Emergency Services Authority of Western Australia (FESA)	President SESVA (SES Volunteer Association)		
Michael	Webster	Fire & Emergency Services Authority of Western Australia (FESA)	Vice President of Bushfire Association WA		
Merv	Austic	Fire & Emergency Services Authority of Western Australia (FESA)	Western Australian Local Government Association representative	15 July 2011	FESA House Perth WA
David	Bruce	Metropolitan Fire & Emergency Services Board, Melbourne (MFB)	A/ Executive Director Strategy & Innovation	18 July 2011	MFB Training Centre, Burnley VIC
Darren	Conlin	Metropolitan Fire & Emergency Services Board, Melbourne (MFB)	Commander Emergency Management		
Adam	Dalrymple	Metropolitan Fire & Emergency Services Board, Melbourne (MFB)	Manager Structural Fire Safety		
Mark	Dalrymple	Metropolitan Fire & Emergency Services Board, Melbourne (MFB)	A/ ACO Central District		
Darren	McQuade	Metropolitan Fire & Emergency Services Board, Melbourne (MFB)	Commander - Emergency Management		
Alan	Quinton	Metropolitan Fire & Emergency Services Board, Melbourne (MFB)	Assistant Chief Officer - Emergency Management		
Greg	Stephenson	Metropolitan Fire & Emergency Services Board, Melbourne (MFB)	Manager Emergency Management		
Frank	Stockton	Metropolitan Fire & Emergency Services Board, Melbourne (MFB)	Commander Community Education		
Mark	Swiney	Metropolitan Fire & Emergency Services Board, Melbourne (MFB)	Operations Improvement		
Graeme	Armstrong	Country Fire Authority, Victoria (CFA)	Regional Commander D13		
Adam	Barnett	Country Fire Authority, Victoria (CFA)	VFBV		
Eric	Collier	Country Fire Authority, Victoria (CFA)	VFBV		
Stuart	Croom	Country Fire Authority, Victoria (CFA)	Professional Development		
Paul	Denham	Country Fire Authority,	VFBV		

		Victoria (CFA)			
Tim	Desmond	Country Fire Authority, Victoria (CFA)	VFBV		
Alistair	Drayton	Country Fire Authority, Victoria (CFA)	Instructor D7		
Penelope	Dunstan	Country Fire Authority, Victoria (CFA)	Professional Development		
Phil	Hawkey	Country Fire Authority, Victoria (CFA)	Project Officer, District 22/23		
Charles	King	Country Fire Authority, Victoria (CFA)	Staff and Volunteer		
Peter	Lucas	Country Fire Authority, Victoria (CFA)	Operations Officer (on secondment to Police)		
Allan	Monti	Country Fire Authority, Victoria (CFA)	VFBV		
Conrad	Barr	ACT Fire Brigade	Deputy Chief	19 July 2011	ESA Headquarters, Canberra ACT
Phil	Canham	ACT Fire Brigade	Superintendent		
Mark	Crosweller	ACT Emergency Service Agency	Commissioner		
Steve	Edwards	ACT Fire Brigade	Superintendent		
Tony	Flaherty	ACT Fire Brigade	Superintendent		
Tony	Graham	ACT State Emergency Service	Chief		
Greg	Kent	ACT Fire Brigade	Superintendent		
Jeremy	Logan	ACT State Emergency Service	Deputy Chief		
Doreen	McEncroe	ACT State Emergency Service ACT State Emergency Service Volunteer Association	Commander/President		
Rick	McRae	ACT Emergency Service Agency	Risk Analyst		
Jim	Schlizio	ACT Fire Brigade	Superintendent		
Paul	Swain	ACT Fire Brigade	Chief Officer		
Nick	Atkins	Dept. Premier and Cabinet	Project Manager	21 July 2011	
Tony	Blanks	Forestry Tasmania	Manager - Fire Management		
Elke	Brown	Tasmania State Emergency Service (TAS SES)	Assistant Director		
Gavin	Freeman	Tasmania Fire Service (TFS)	Deputy Chief Officer		
Damien	Killalea	Tasmania Fire Service (TFS)	Director - Community Fire Safety		
Andrew	Lea	Tasmania State Emergency Service (TAS SES)	Director		

Robyn	Pearce	Tasmania Fire Service (TFS)	Director - Human Services				
Adrian	Pyrke	Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service	Manager Fire Operations				
Dave	Robson	Forestry Tasmania					
Cheryl	Gaston	South Australian State Emergency Service (SACFS)	Communications Volunteer Wyalla	23 July 2011	SES Headquarters Adelaide SA		
David	Bussenschott	Country Fire Service, South Australia (CFS SA)	Northern Peninsula Officer	23 July 2011	CFS State Training Centre, Brukunga SA		
Nick	Ditter	Country Fire Service, South Australia (CFS SA)	Youth Advisory Council Deputy Chair				
Roger	Flavell	Country Fire Service, South Australia (CFS SA)	CFS Volunteer Association President				
Rob	Giles	Country Fire Service, South Australia (CFS SA)	Strath Group Officer				
Kym	Haebich	Country Fire Service, South Australia (CFS SA)	Northern Barossa Group Officer				
Barry	Hetherington	Country Fire Service, South Australia (CFS SA)	Lower Eyre Group Officer				
John	Hutchins	Country Fire Service, South Australia (CFS SA)	Regional Commander - Paid Staff				
Brett	McLaren	Country Fire Service, South Australia (CFS SA)	Lacepede Deputy Group Officer				
Andy	Thomas	Country Fire Service, South Australia (CFS SA)	Burra Group Officer				
Robert	Ziersch	Country Fire Service, South Australia (CFS SA)	Chaffey Group Officer				
Roger	Bird	Department of Community Safety, QLD - Queensland Fire & Rescue Service (DCS - QFRS)	Superintendent, Executive Manager, Professional Development			25 July 2011	Queensland Combined Emergency Services Academy, Lytton QLD
Bruce	Byatt	Department of Community Safety, QLD - Queensland Fire & Rescue Service (DCS - QFRS)	Chief Superintendent, Director Regional Operations				
Lance	Duncan	Department of Community Safety, QLD - Queensland Fire & Rescue Service (DCS - QFRS)	Superintendent, Executive Manager, Professional Development				
Simon	Evans	Department of Community Safety, QLD - Queensland Fire & Rescue Service (DCS - QFRS)	Inspector, Project Manager				
Frank	Garland	Department of	Acting Inspector,				

		Community Safety, QLD - Queensland Fire & Rescue Service (DCS - QFRS)	Manager, Officer Development Unit		
Noel	Harbottle	Department of Community Safety, QLD - Queensland Fire & Rescue Service (DCS - QFRS)	Superintendent, Zone Commander		
Iain	MacKenzie	Department of Community Safety, QLD - Queensland Fire & Rescue Service (DCS - QFRS)	Deputy Commissioner		
Ian	Mitchell	Department of Community Safety, QLD - Queensland Fire & Rescue Service (DCS - QFRS)	Assistant Commissioner, Brisbane Region		
Neil	Reid	Department of Community Safety, QLD - Queensland Fire & Rescue Service (DCS - QFRS)	Chief Superintendent, Director State Community Safety Operations Branch		
Greg	Reynolds	Department of Community Safety, QLD - Queensland Fire & Rescue Service (DCS - QFRS)	Superintendent, Executive Manager, Core Operational Training Command		
John	Rolfe	Department of Community Safety, QLD - Queensland Fire & Rescue Service (DCS - QFRS)	Acting Manager, Learning and Development Unit		
Andrew	Short	Department of Community Safety, QLD - Queensland Fire & Rescue Service (DCS - QFRS)	Chief Superintendent, School of Fire and Rescue Service Training		
Denis	Stunden	Department of Community Safety, QLD - Queensland Fire & Rescue Service (DCS - QFRS)	Inspector, Executive Development Unit		
Mick	Ayre	Northern Territory Police Fire & Emergency Services (NT PFES)	Acting Director	27 July 2011	NTFRS Headquarters Darwin NT
Jo	Buck	Northern Territory Police Fire & Emergency Services (NT PFES)	Training & Development		
Alison	Edwards	Northern Territory Police Fire & Emergency Services (NT PFES)	Curriculum Development Officer, Training & Development		
David	Ellis	Northern Territory Police Fire & Emergency Services (NT PFES)	Assistant Director Operations		
Mick	Hutton	Northern Territory Police Fire & Emergency Services	(Station Officer) Acting District Officer Special		

		(NT PFES)	Operations		
Ian	Lockley	Northern Territory Police Fire & Emergency Services (NT PFES)	District Officer Support/Staff Officer		
Beth	Moloney	Northern Territory Police Fire & Emergency Services (NT PFES)	Acting Assistant Director		
Scott	Perry	Northern Territory Police Fire & Emergency Services (NT PFES)	Watch Commander Operations		
Dave	Pettit	Northern Territory Police Fire & Emergency Services (NT PFES)	District Officer, Auxiliary and Volunteer		
Rochelle	Richardson	Northern Territory Police Fire & Emergency Services (NT PFES)	Workforce Development Officer, Training & Development		
Mark	Swain	Northern Territory Police Fire & Emergency Services (NT PFES)	District Officer, Training & Development		
Andrew	Bennett	Department of Sustainability & Environment, Victoria (DSE VIC)		29 July 2011	DSE Headquarters East Melbourne VIC
John	Franapency	Department of Sustainability & Environment, Victoria (DSE VIC)			
Andrew	Graystone	Department of Sustainability & Environment, Victoria (DSE VIC)			
Greg	Harry	Department of Sustainability & Environment, Victoria (DSE VIC)			
Francis	Hines	Department of Sustainability & Environment, Victoria (DSE VIC)			
Rodney	Lyn	Department of Sustainability & Environment, Victoria (DSE VIC)			
Jamie	Molloy	Department of Sustainability & Environment, Victoria (DSE VIC)			
Lex	Wade	Department of Sustainability & Environment, Victoria (DSE VIC)			
Wol (Ian)	Worrell	Department of Sustainability & Environment, Victoria (DSE VIC)			

Larry	Cocker	New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS)	Acting Manager, ER & HR Services	1 August 2011	NZFS Headquarters Wellington NZ
Michael	Farrand	New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS)	Chief Fire Officer, Tawa Volunteer Fire Brigade		
Simon	George	New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS)	Principal Organisational Development Advisor		
David	Guard	New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS)	National Training Manager		
Carl	Mills	New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS)	Chief Fire Officer, Plimmerton Volunteer Fire Brigade		
Geoff	Purcell	New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS)	National Training Centre Manager		
Chris	Walbran	New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS)	National Advisor, Volunteer Service Operations (Not a vol)		
Paula	Beever	New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS)	National Director, Fire Risk Management		
Mitchell	Brown	New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS)	Area Manager		
Bill	Butzbach	New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS)	Director, Strategic Development		
Brian	Davey	New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS)	National Manager, Operational Standards		
Rachel	de Haas	New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS)	Organisational Development Advisor		
Peter	Dempsey	New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS)	Area Manager Region		
Gavin	Dunphy	New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS)	Assistant Area Manager		
Pam	Markham-Barrett	New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS)	Manager, Remuneration and Organisational Development		
Jeff	Maunder	New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS)	Advisor Operational Efficiency		
Paul	McGill	New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS)	Director, Operations & Training		
Mike	Mealings	New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS)	Manager, Officer Training		
Simon	Quirk	New Zealand Fire Service (NZFS)	Senior Firefighter, Tawa VFB (volunteer)		

Annex D: Meetings with Stakeholders

Participants		Organisation	Job Title	Date	Location/ Communication
Given Name	Surname				
Scott	Williams	Fire Protection Association Australia (FPAA)	Chief Executive Officer	19 May 2011	FPAA Offices, Box Hill
Mark	Reilly	Institution of Fire Engineers (IFE)	National President	1 June 2011	The Sebel Hotel, Albert Park, Melbourne
Andrew	Comer				
Diane	Cooper	Australian Emergency Management Institute (AEMI)	Professional Education Strategy and Research	17 June 2011	AFAC Offices, East Melbourne
Carolyn	Thompson		Director, Education, Research and Training		
Mick	Farrell	United Fire Fighters Union Australia (UFU)	National President	30 June 2011	UFU Headquarters, Fitzroy
Peter	Marshall		National Secretary		