



Police Federation
of Australia

The National Voice of Policing

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Committee Secretary
Senate Education and Employment Committees
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Fair Work (Respect for Emergency Services Volunteers) Bill 2016

This submission is made on behalf of the Police Federation of Australia, who represents over 60,000 police officers nationally; across all state and territory jurisdictions and includes the Australian Federal Police Association.

It is important to note that only Victoria and the Australian Federal Police currently operate under the Fair Work Act, while all other jurisdictions – excepting the Northern Territory, operate under various state acts. In the Northern Territory, the police force operates under an arbitral tribunal.

Therefore, while the proposed Fair Work (Respect for Emergency Services Volunteers) Bill 2016 will likely have little impact on current police operations, we are seeking to ensure that its coverage could not be extended to policing into the future.

As we understand, the Bill will allow for an ‘emergency services body’, established for a public purpose by or under the law of the Commonwealth or a State or Territory, to be declared as such by regulation. Such an outcome would cause great concern for policing.

We further understand that sections 254A and 281AA of the Bill allow for certain volunteer bodies to make submissions in relation to a matter before the FWC.

Should this provision be ratified, I would expect police employers as well as the police associations would strongly oppose this provision. .

Both the Australian Federal Police and Victorian police force engages volunteers within their operations in a limited capacity - not in operational roles and not on a structured basis. This is unlike what occurs within the Country Fire Authority or other like bodies.

Should this Bill be carried, the proposed provision will likely only serve to hinder and restrict police forces from encouraging the use of volunteers

The PFA therefore submits that the Bill should expressly state that the Commonwealth cannot declare a police force of any Australian jurisdiction an 'emergency services body'.

Yours sincerely

Mark Burgess
Chief Executive Officer