



## IN BRIEF



### More firefighters ...

In mid September, with the start of the fire season just 43 days away, more than 1,000 CFA and MFB firefighters marched through Melbourne's streets demanding action to fix Victoria's under-resourced fire services.



### Not less!

"In April, an independent Board of Reference ruled that 24 CFA stations be upgraded," says Peter Marshall. "But nothing has been done to employ the required number of firefighters and allocate additional resources to these locations."

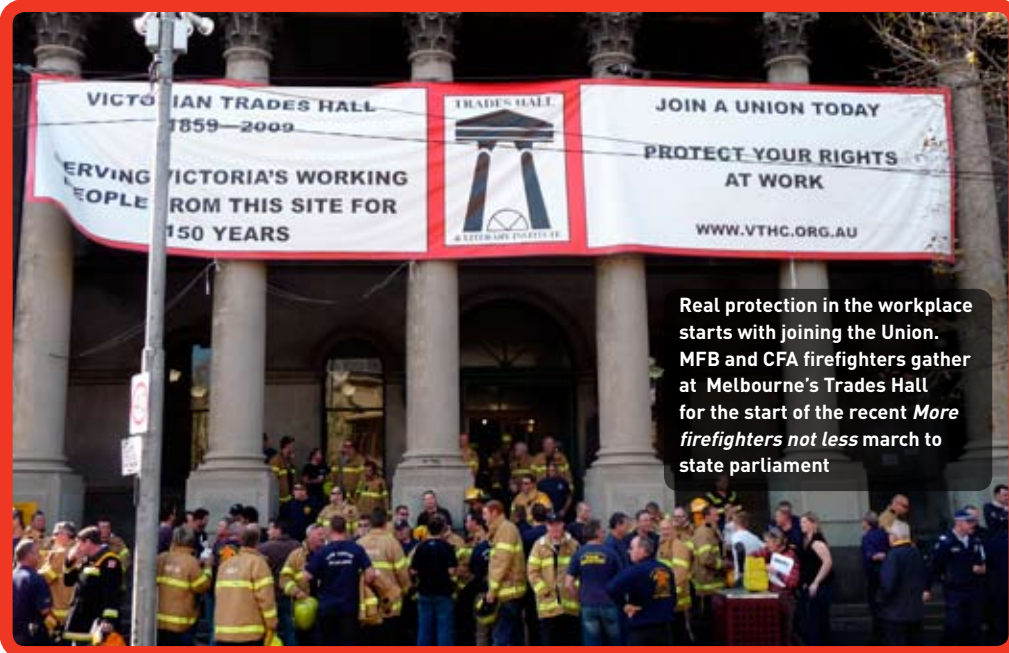


### Blame game

"The Victorian government hasn't done a thing either," says Peter Marshall. "It blames the CFA while the CFA blames government. Meanwhile, 24 communities have less than a 50% chance of getting a fire truck if they need one."

## CONTACT

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Real protection in the workplace starts with joining the Union. MFB and CFA firefighters gather at Melbourne's Trades Hall for the start of the recent *More firefighters not less* march to state parliament

# A single agreement

In Victoria, with EB negotiations under way, the Union is aiming for one agreement to cover all MFB operational staff

In early September, the UFU Victorian Branch lodged an application with Fair Work Australia (FWA) seeking a 'scope order' to negotiate a single agreement to cover all operational staff, from Recruit to ACFO, employed by the Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board.

"The Union believes the ranks should not be isolated in three separate agreements," says Victorian Branch Secretary Peter Marshall. "But soon after we lodged the application, MFB management lodged one of its own, seeking a three agreement scope order."

The fire and emergency services industry

requires a high degree of teamwork and unity to provide the best possible protection to a community or individual when they need it. "So we think this should be reflected in a single enterprise agreement for operational Members," says Peter.

Due to uncertainty surrounding the implementation of the Federal government's new Fair Work laws, the UFU requested the scope order application be referred to the Full Bench of FWA for determination. This request has been granted and the Union is now planning hearing dates for submissions and witness statements.

## SOLID CAREER PATH

There is much to be gained from a single agreement says Peter Marshall. "For Members, it would provide a sound career structure and career path – and create administrative efficiencies as well, so I can't see why management is holding out."

The MFB operational ranks have more conditions in common than they have apart, they work together at the same locations

and on the same incidents and matters, and one agreement complies with Members' desire to bargain collectively.

"But if the MFB gets away with a separate agreement for ACFO's and Commanders, you can be certain that in the future the MFB will keep chipping away at all other ranks to divide and rule the workforce," says Peter Marshall.