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GOVERNMENT REVIEW OF FIRE AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

As you may be aware, the State Government has expressed a commitment to create a more efficient public sector and deliver better services to the community.

With this in mind, the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC), at the direction of Minister for Emergency Services the Hon. Fran Logan MLA, is currently undertaking a review of DFES. This is to assess the Department's future roles and functions, and ensure we are aligned to the government's agenda.

A working group has been established for this purpose, with the first meeting having taken place in late July. Recognising that fire and emergencies affect many different areas of government, the group includes representatives from DFES, DPC, the Public Sector Commission, the Department Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (including the Parks and Wildlife Service), the Office of Emergency Management (OEM), Office of Bushfire Risk Management, and the Departments of Treasury, and Planning, Lands and Heritage.

The objectives of the group are to:

- make recommendations on the future structure of DFES, particularly in relation to the possibility of a Rural Fire Service and the role of OEM (resulting from the Ferguson Inquiry);
- to incorporate outcomes of the recent Bushfire Mitigation Summit; and
- to provide advice on the management of the Emergency Services Levy.

I am representing DFES on the working group, and contributing my views in a constructive and collaborative manner, working towards the best possible solution for the people of Western Australia and the future of the Department.

I understand the intention is to put the working group's recommendations to the Minister by late September, so that the State Government may take the opportunity to make some key announcements before the start of the bushfire season.

I recognise that matters such as these can create a degree of uncertainty and unease, but please trust that you will be kept well informed as any next steps become clearer.

I thank you all for the outstanding work you do and encourage you to remain focused and committed to serving the Western Australian community.

WAYNE GREGSON APM
COMMISSIONER