

# CFA crisis: Why the board was sacked

June 10, 2016

[Read later](#)**Timna Jacks**[Email article](#)[Print](#)[Reprints & permissions](#)

Don't Play

0:00 / 1:38

**CFA board must accept deal or be replaced**

The Victorian government has given the CFA board until 5pm Friday to accept a deal with the firefighters union or face dismissal. Video courtesy ABC News 24.

[Premier moves to sack CFA board](#)

[Full statement from Minister James Merlino](#)

[Analysis: Andrews steamrolls process](#)

[Victorian firefighter dispute: the burning questions](#)

The board of the state's rural and suburban firefighting force has been sacked over its resistance to a workplace deal it fears will hand too much control to the militant union and undermine equal opportunity laws.

Having lost his emergency services minister Jane Garrett due to her opposition to the workplace deal with the united firefighters union in the morning, Premier Daniel Andrews fronted a press conference with dozens of CFA firefighters to argue that Victorians safety would be improved by forcing the board to cave in or sacking them.



CFA volunteers and supporters rally in Treasury Gardens on June 5. Photo: Daniel Pockett

By Friday evening, new Minister James Merlino announced that he had begun proceedings to sack the CFA board.

For weeks Ms Garrett and the CFA board have resisted the proposed agreement, citing concerns it would undermine management control and the role of volunteerism as well as be in breach of equal opportunity laws.

The CFA board has maintained that the deal had unlawful clauses.

But after Friday's emergency cabinet meeting, and fresh from the resignation of Ms Garrett, new concessions were announced in a bid to ease volunteer fears.

Mr Andrews said a statement of joint intent between the CFA and the union would be created to ensure the EBA would not override the National Employment Standards around requesting flexible working arrangements .

The CFA board has legal advice that says the agreement would be unlawful in this area.

One of the most contentious issues has been the requirement for seven professional firefighters to be dispatched to a fire incident, something the MFB already does and Mr Andrews supports.

A statement of joint intent between the CFA and the UFU will be crafted to "commit the parties to working together on the rollout of 350 new firefighters and the implementation of the seven on the fireground dispatch model" the government said.

The Premier stood by the seven firefighter rule for integrated stations, saying it was critical to safety, and that it would not affect volunteers.

And on controversial consultation and dispute resolution procedures the government will seek a commitment from the parties that "agreement will not be unreasonably withheld".

Under Labor's resolution any goodwill agreement that saw one of the parties act in an "unreasonable way" would be referred to the full bench of the Fair Work Commission.

"Volunteer and career firefighters have told us they're sick of being used as a political football – they want this fixed because they want the focus back on fighting fires and keeping their communities safe," Mr Andrews said.

And with the deal edging closer Mr Andrews said important work to reform the CFA's poor culture could begin.

The Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission has found that firefighting has a poor culture and lacks diversity.

Mr Andrews is now promising to tackle that.

"You will never deliver cultural change, reform or improvement will this spiteful EBA continues," he said.

"My government will make sure that more firefighters turn out to dangerous fires, if I'm criticised for that then so be it."

## Recommended



[Girl, 13, dies during tug-of-war game at school](#)

World



[New Top Gear branded a 'diabolical disaster' as fans...](#)

Entertainment



[Cyclist in hospital under police guard after being hit...](#)

Victoria



[Artist sums up marriage in one painting](#)

Essential Kids

## Promoted Stories



[13 Hot Celebrities With Embarrassing Spouses](#)

Trendier



[Take the Car Engine Quiz That Stumps Even the...](#)

HowStuffWorks - Auto



[You Won't Believe What Prince Harry's Reply To The...](#)

Celebrity Mozo



[Doctor: Brilliant New Way to Tighten "Saggy Skin..."](#)

Live Healthy Journal



**Susan Sarandon opens up on Woody Allen's child sex...**

*Daily Life*



**How much do real estate agents REALLY make?**

*LocalAgentFinder*

Recommended by

[Email article](#)

[Print](#)

[Reprints & permissions](#)