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The CFA industrial dispute looks set to drag into the summer.

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# CFA pay deal: Authority refuses to release hundreds of documents to volunteers

Angus Thompson, Herald Sun

September 27, 2016 1:45pm

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subpoenaed material allegedly linked to the controversial pay deal.

Volunteer Fire Brigade Victoria barrister Stuart Wood, QC, told Supreme Court judge Michael McDonald just 20 requested documents had been produced, while 1132 were being withheld.

“They’ve denied us documents that clearly harm their case.

“They can’t keep disarming us from proving our case,” Mr Wood said.

The new CFA board members, selected after the previous board refused to endorse the enterprise bargaining agreement, have been ordered to turn over correspondence about their promotion.

They join Emergency Services Minister James Merlino, CFA chief executive Frances Diver and chief officer Steve Warrington in being subpoenaed for material over the proposed deal.



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CFA chief officer Steven Warrington.

Emergency Services Minister James Merlino.  
Picture: Andrew Tauber

VFBV is seeking an injunction against the CFA putting the enterprise bargaining agreement to a vote, a move they say would give the United Firefighters Union veto powers over the authority.

Justice Jack Forrest is to decide on the release of the documents this Thursday, but Justice McDonald this morning heard the CFA may continue to resist, using tactics likened to “trench warfare” by Mr Wood.

“We have to get the documents in order to get a fair trial,” he said.

“Unless our learned friends change their position this still has a fair way to play out.”

The already delayed October 3 trial date has been pushed further back to October 17, with Justice McDonald expressing concern “this matter is not going get on for trial before Christmas.”

Stephen Donaghue, QC, acting for the CFA, urged Justice McDonald to expedite the case, arguing the delays were not the authority’s fault.