

Minister Tony Piccolo

Minister for Emergency Services

Monday, 23 February, 2015

New step towards the reform of the sector

The Emergency Service Reform Reference Group was today presented with a new step towards the reform of the sector, where the Chief Officer positions are retained as operational heads of their respective service.

Emergency Services Minister Tony Piccolo said phase one of the reform will progress in a considered manner from April to begin removing duplication in non-operational areas.

“Key appointments will soon be made in the South Australian Fire and Emergency Commission to look after the corporate streams of the services,” Minister Piccolo said.

“The non-operational areas – like training and human resources for example – will be moved into SAFECOM.

“After the feedback I have received, the Chief Officer position will be retained to provide leadership in the operational stream of the three services.

“Primarily, this is to reassure the volunteer and paid personnel in the sector that their identity will be retained.

“It will also mean that the Chiefs will have less non-operational work and can focus on the operational aspects of their respective services.

“I am also bringing together the key leadership groups in preparation for the appointment of a Commissioner, who will work with the sector to help the transition into the model.”

The three corporate areas to begin progressively from April are:

- Capability and Support;
- Volunteer Services and Community Resilience; and
- Strategic and Corporate Services.

Mr Piccolo said that the current SAFECOM board will also be retained in the short-term until a final sector model had been developed.

“In consultation with current stakeholders, I will be requesting that the current board be re-appointed to oversee the changes,” he said.

“I will now write to the stakeholders to provide more details to take to their membership. The reference group will meet again soon to discuss the feedback they’ve received.

“The reform of the sector will continue and the goal is, as it always has been, to provide the best service to protect the community and maximise support for our personnel on the frontline.”

Media contact: Spiro Karanikos-Mimis 0401 040 532