

Country Fire Authority – Board Member

Position details

Classification:	Board Member
Employment Type:	Part time
Salary:	\$54,585
Position reports to:	Minister for Emergency Services
Time commitment:	Up to 12 Board meetings per year, as well as relevant subcommittee meetings (occurring monthly or quarterly) or as required.
Duration:	Fixed period, of either 1.5 years or three years.

About the Country Fire Authority

The *Country Fire Authority Act 1958* establishes the Country Fire Authority (CFA) Board. The CFA is a fully volunteer fire fighting service with over 54,000 volunteers. These volunteers include firefighters, community educators and support personnel spread across 1,219 brigades, 21 districts and five regions in Victoria.

The CFA vision is to ensure Victorian communities are prepared for and safe from fire. The mission to protect lives and property underpins all of CFA's work in fire prevention and preparedness activities. It is a trusted authority because it has the community reach, the local knowledge and skills to best prepare communities for fire and to respond to fire emergencies.

Appointment as Board Member

The CFA Board is a statutory authority within the Justice and Community Safety portfolio. The CFA Board consists of up to nine Board Members and reports to the Minister for Emergency Services. Five members of the CFA Board, including the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and three other Board Members are appointed by the Governor in Council on recommendation of the Minister for Emergency Services. Four members are nominated by a panel from the Board of Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria.

A Board Member holds office for a period specified in the Instrument of Appointment which cannot exceed three years. A Board Member is eligible for reappointment and is entitled to receive remuneration and travel and other allowances, as fixed by the Governor in Council, unless the Board Member is an employee of the public service. The *Public Administration Act 2004* (other than Part 3 of the Act) applies to a Board Member if they are employed in the public service.

Role of the CFA Board

The CFA Board is responsible for setting strategic direction and ensuring appropriate governance arrangements are effectively and efficiently implemented, including to:

- contribute to a whole of sector approach to emergency management
- promote a culture within the emergency management sector of community focus, interoperability and public value

- support the effective and sustainable recruitment, development and retention of volunteer officers and members, including those located in the Fire Rescue Victoria fire district, to deliver capability in the provision of the Authority's services.

The CFA Board ensures CFA carries out its functions in a manner such that services provided are: effective and efficient; consistent with prudent financial management practices; and safe and secure.

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) supports the CFA Board and is responsible for the day-to-day management including implementation of policies and general business administration. The CFA Chief Officer supports the Chief Executive Officer and is responsible for the operational arrangements of the organisation. The CEO, together with the CFA Executive Leadership Team and CFA Chief Officer, is accountable to the CFA Board for overall management and performance of CFA.

The Victorian Government is committed to ensuring that its boards reflect the diversity of the Victorian community. We welcome applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people of all ages, women, people with disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, gender diverse and intersex people.

Board subcommittees

In carrying out its responsibilities, the CFA Board is supported by subcommittees including, but not limited to, the following:

Finance, Risk and Audit Committee – This subcommittee provides the CFA Board with oversight, review and assurance regarding financial sustainability and reporting, risk management, internal and external audit, and regulatory compliance. Ernst & Young conduct CFA's internal audit and report directly to the committee each time it meets. The Auditor-General audits CFA's annual financial statements and advises the committee.

People and Culture Committee – This subcommittee provides the CFA Board with oversight, review and assurance for people and culture plans, and programs of work and policy, including change management, workplace relations and staff development, and performance and succession.

Remuneration Committee – This subcommittee provides oversight, review and assurance regarding CFA's executive remuneration and policy.

Board Members with the relevant expertise or experience are expected to attend the relevant subcommittees.

Expectations of CFA Board Members

CFA Board Members are expected to:

- Attend and actively participate in a minimum of 75 per cent of Board meetings.
- Develop a comprehensive understanding of the CFA's finances, scope of services, strategic context and legal framework.
- Adhere to the relevant obligations and duties set out in the Victorian Public Sector Commission's (VPSC) Directors' Code of Conduct¹. This includes bringing any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest or conflicts of duty to the attention of the CFA Board Chairperson.
- Promote and develop policies and procedures to improve performance, ensure legislative compliance, and that appropriate risk management strategies are in place.

¹ <https://vpsc.vic.gov.au/resources/code-of-conduct-for-directors/>

- Ensure CFA carries out its functions in a manner that is safe, effective, efficient and consistent with prudent financial management practices.
- Contribute to CFA maintaining a safe, positive and productive work environment free from discrimination, bullying and harassment.
- Comply with relevant CFA and VPSC policies and procedures, including but not limited to the VPSC and CFA's values.
- Advise the Minister for Emergency Services on the administration of the CFA Act and on any other matter referred to CFA by the Minister.
- Any other functions that are conferred on CFA by the CFA Act or any other Act.

The time commitment required to serve on the CFA Board includes:

- Attending approximately 12 CFA Board meetings per year (these meetings may be part or full days and may be conducted during business hours).
- Attending relevant subcommittee meetings which meet monthly or quarterly.
- Reviewing agenda items and Board papers in anticipation of upcoming CFA Board meetings.
- Reviewing CFA Board meeting minutes to confirm what was discussed and agreed .
- Attending events where CFA requires representation, including fundraising and other community events as delegated by the Board Chair from time to time.

Key selection criteria

To be eligible as a Board Member of CFA, a person **must** possess knowledge of, or experience in, **one** or more of the following areas:

- **Commercial** (including significant commercial and business experience)
- **Financial** (including financial management and accounting capabilities; an ability to oversee the financial position of CFA; analyse key financial statements; critically assess financial performance; oversee budgets and the efficient use of resources; and oversee funding arrangements and accountability)
- **Technical** (including experience in relation to significant information communication technology programs and an ability to provide critical insights and governance)
- **Operational** (including senior leadership, human resources, governance, risk management, public policy, government and stakeholder relations, strategic planning and brand and reputation management skills and experience)
- **Legal** (including an ability to identify key legal risks and to provide governance in relation to the resolution of legal risks)
- **Expertise** in fire services, emergency management and land management or any other field relevant to the performance of the functions of the CFA

Other desirable skills include:

- Governance including an understanding of the regulatory environment in which CFA operates; a capacity to ensure that external compliance and reporting requirements are met; and, a capacity to ensure that CFA provides a safe environment for volunteers and staff and supports a culture of ongoing improvement in relation to workplace health and safety.
- Risk management and compliance/audit capability to oversee major risks; the ability to identify key risks to the organisation in a wide range of areas including decision making, monitoring performance, legal and regulatory compliance; and to monitor risk and compliance management frameworks and systems.
- Environmental occupational health and safety, including an understanding of land management practices, agriculture, conservation and occupational health and safety.
- Public administration and local government, including an understanding of the *Public Administration Act 2004* which sets out key governance standards for Victoria's

public sector and connection with Local Government to ensure bushfire and emergency management approaches meet community requirements.

- Community and stakeholder management including capability to reflect the expectations of community and stakeholders and the ability to effectively engage and communicate with them.
- Public relations/marketing and communication including understanding how to implement network and communication strategy, manage relationships and ensure effective reputational management.