

**Submission
No 580**

INQUIRY INTO RECYCLING AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

Name: Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board (MFB)

Date Received: 29 May 2019

Submission to the Parliament of Victoria Legislative Council Environment and Planning Committee Inquiry into Recycling and Waste Management by the Metropolitan Fire & Emergency Services Board

29 May 2019

1. Introduction

The Metropolitan Fire & Emergency Services Board (**MFB**) has been requested to attend to give evidence at this Inquiry as part of the initial public hearings into the Campbellfield factory fire in early April. MFB has prepared this submission to provide information about that fire and about other fires and issues that may be relevant to the Parliament of Victoria Legislative Council Environment and Planning Committee's (**Committee**) work.

MFB has the responsibility to provide fire safety, fire suppression and fire prevention services and emergency response services in the metropolitan district of Melbourne. MFB's defined purpose is to deliver excellent fire and rescue services to the Metropolitan District and wider Victorian community through its Operational Preparedness, State Capability, Community Resilience and Operational Response functions. MFB will ensure its capacity and capabilities are world class and reflect the needs of the Victorian community.¹

MFB is committed to responding strategically to changes in the operating environment, including the challenges caused by the current recycling and waste industry issues and the problematic fires occurring at toxic stockpiles. Those fires represent examples of market failure and shortcomings, as well as some situations of blatant non-compliance by private industry. The effect of this has been that risk has been transferred to MFB. In this way, MFB is in a unique position. If change does not occur, it is MFB that must attend any catastrophic fires at toxic stockpiles. It is MFB firefighters (along with other emergency management workers) who must confront health and safety challenges. It is MFB that must seek funding for the additional significant costs of these fires when no one else is able to pay for it.

MFB's view is that improvements could be considered so that MFB and, more importantly, the community, does not bear the human and financial cost of these toxic stockpile fires.

MFB has been an active member of the Resource Recovery Facilities Audit Taskforce (**Taskforce**) and related working groups, working with other agencies. MFB has identified some opportunities to improve the working across agencies in this submission. These are operational matters rather than matters of policy, and MFB is committed to discussing these suggestions with relevant parties and at the pending coronial investigation.

2. MFB

2.1 MFB was established in 1891 by the *Fire Brigades Act 1890* (Vic). MFB was created in response to a number of major fires in Melbourne in 1890, where there was significant property damage, representing a consolidation of fire response in the Melbourne area.

2.2 Since that time, MFB's fundamental aim has been to create a safer community. Over the course of the last 128 years, in response to the growing population, changing urban environment, introduction of new technologies and products, changing regulation and increased public expectations, the scope of MFB's responsibilities has varied significantly.

2.3 MFB derives its operational powers from the *Metropolitan Fire Brigades Act 1958* (Vic) (**MFB Act**). These powers sit with MFB's Chief Officer.² Under the MFB Act, MFB is the statutory

¹ MFB Plan 2018-19

² Section 31.



authority responsible for providing emergency response, fire safety, suppression and prevention services to over 4 million residents, workers and visitors in metropolitan Melbourne and the port waters of the port of Melbourne. In all its operational activities, MFB's primary objectives are the preservation of life, property and the environment.

- 2.4 In addition to its fire and rescue functions, MFB undertakes a range of other activities, including:
- providing advice on fire safety issues in the built environment;
 - providing emergency medical response;
 - providing emergency response coverage to the inland waters and the port waters of the port of Melbourne within the metropolitan district (being the defined area of statutory responsibility in the MFB Act);
 - developing fire safety and emergency plans for major events;
 - participating in community safety activities; and
 - providing assistance in relation to a range of emergencies, including industrial accidents, hazardous material handling and storage incidents and chemical, biological and radiological emergencies.
- 2.5 MFB is able to provide independent expert advice to government, industry and the community about fire and life safety risk consistent with its statutory responsibilities. MFB's role has been recognised by coroners, and MFB's senior operational personnel view advocating for fire safety as a key responsibility of MFB.
- 2.6 MFB currently operates across the prevention, preparedness, response and recovery spectrum in dealing with emergencies. Underpinning MFB's response function is its ability to prevent or prepare for that response. MFB relies on other parties to enforce regulations relevant to safety. Any failure to do so impacts directly on MFB's ability to prevent, prepare for, or respond to fires and emergencies in the future.
- 2.7 MFB does not have a direct role in identifying toxic stockpiles and has been working with the Environmental Protection Authority (**EPA**), Victorian WorkCover Authority (**WorkSafe**), Country Fire Authority (**CFA**) and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (**DELWP**) on the Taskforce.
- 2.8 Under the MFB Act, MFB's Chief Officer has the statutory responsibility to protect life, property and the environment in the case of fire, and a duty to respond to every fire in the Metropolitan District. The Chief Officer and MFB as an employer also have responsibilities under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic) to provide a safe workplace for MFB employees. The definition of 'workplace' extends across a range of environments MFB may be required to respond to, and includes all structures that firefighters may encounter in relation to a fire, accident, explosion or other emergency.

3. Campbellfield

MFB's involvement pre-fire

- 3.1 MFB had some involvement with the site located at 16-18 Thorneycroft Street, Campbellfield (**Campbellfield Site**) prior to the fire on 5 April 2019.



- 3.2 On 11 May 2018, MFB received an Application for Fire Service Written Advice by Bradbury Industrial Services Pty Ltd (**Bradbury**) on fire protection and emergency planning in relation to the Campbellfield Site.³
- 3.3 On 25 June 2018, staff of MFB's Dangerous Goods department attended and inspected the Campbellfield Site. On this same day a report containing written advice (**Advice**) was generated by MFB and sent to Bradbury and WorkSafe.⁴ The Advice included information and hazards on the premises and fire safety matters to be addressed. MFB outlined in the Advice that Bradbury is expected to have actioned the items within 60 days.
- 3.4 On 17 August 2018, MFB received a response from Bradbury confirming that it had addressed the matters outlined in the Advice. Bradbury also provided photographic evidence of its actions and other required documents.⁵ MFB was satisfied with Bradbury's response.
- 3.5 On 26 March 2019, during an Executive Oversight Group meeting for high-risk illegal dangerous goods sites (specifically associated with the Epping and Campbellfield illegal and non-complaint dangerous goods sites) chaired by Worksafe, the group, including MFB, was informed by EPA that:
- 3.5.1 The Campbellfield Site was inspected as part of a clean-up plan associated with high-risk dangerous goods;
 - 3.5.2 the Campbellfield Site was identified as non-compliant with an excessive quantity of dangerous goods stored;
 - 3.5.3 A notice to restrict trading at the Campbellfield Site was issued on Bradbury;
 - 3.5.4 Bradbury was instructed not to accept additional waste at the Campbellfield Site but was allowed to continue processing to reduce the volume of dangerous goods on site; and
 - 3.5.5 Bradbury was removed from the clean-up plan as a processing centre.

MFB's attendance at the fire

- 3.6 At approximately 6.40am on Friday 5 April 2019, MFB firefighters responded to a large, well-developed fire at the Campbellfield Site (**Campbellfield Fire**). The fire was categorised as an '8th alarm' structure fire response. The minimum resourcing for this level of response includes: 29 pumping appliances, one teleboom, one rescue unit, three ladder platforms, one Breathing Apparatus unit, one control unit, one ultra large pumper, one hose layer pod, one rehab unit, one flexible habitat pod, one HAZMAT unit, one Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems unit, four Commanders, one District Control Centre (**DCC**) manager to staff the DCC, two Assistant Chief Fire Officers (**ACFO**), one ACFO location at the discretion of the State Agency Controller, one Deputy Chief Officer, one Scientific Advisor, the Brigade Medical Service and the Fire Investigation and Analysis department. The Chief Officer also attended the incident. An '8th alarm' is the highest category ever given to an MFB emergency response. This level of alarm categorisation is rare, with the Campbellfield Fire and fire at 420 Somerville Road, Tottenham on 30 August 2018 (**Tottenham Fire**) being the only two '8th alarm' MFB emergencies in recent years.
- 3.7 The Incident Management Team (**IMT**) was initially informed that there were up to 280,000 litres of flammable liquid product stored in the 50m x 50m premises. The IMT worked with building management to identify the full extent of the hazards at the Campbellfield Site, which informed the initial tactical plan to mount an aggressive attack on the rear of the premises.

³ Attachment 1.

⁴ Attachment 2.

⁵ Attachment 3.



- 3.8 MFB fire crews used aerial appliances, the Emergency Management Victoria Firebird 300 aerial observation platform and Remote Piloted Aircraft (drones) to provide situational awareness and assist in the mapping of the fire to direct the firefighting attack. At the height of the fire, approximately 175 firefighters and more than 40 appliances were on scene.
- 3.9 The fire was declared 'under control'⁶ at 12:08hrs, approximately five and a half hours after MFB was initially mobilised. MFB remained on scene, extinguishing the fire and monitoring the site for fire safety purposes, for four days. MFB handed the site over to Worksafe on Tuesday 9 April.
- 3.10 The cause and origin of the fire is under investigation by MFB's Fire Investigation and Analysis Unit. MFB has not yet completed its operational debrief and Fire Investigation and Analysis report, and therefore is not in a position to provide these documents to the Committee at this time. MFB notes that Coroner Bracken is considering this fire, and MFB will provide these documents, evidence and submissions to Coroner Bracken as part of his investigation.

4. Other toxic stockpile fires

- 4.1 The Committee may be aware that, unlike the Campbellfield Fire, the Tottenham Fire occurred at a site that was unregulated, in that the extent of the toxic stockpile was unknown, and the site was not subject to a pre-incident plan from the Taskforce.
- 4.2 MFB has attended a number of fires involving toxic stockpiles, and sadly expects to attend more. These sites are akin to 'ticking time bombs', representing significant risk and insecurity for MFB firefighters and local communities.
- 4.3 Details of the MFB's attendance at waste fires from 2017 to date are tabled below:

⁶ 'Under control' means that no further resources are required.



Date	Facility name and/or location	Licensed facility?	Response duration (days)	Recycling Taskforce involved?	Number of MFB personnel and appliances deployed	Ongoing environmental contamination issues?	Health concern reports submitted by MFB personnel
13/7/17	SKM Coolaroo	yes	11+	This event led to formation of the Taskforce	8th ~200 F/f's in excess of 40 appliances	Yes	Yes
25/8/17	Cheltenham Bayside Recycling	yes	<1	n/a	2nd 25 F/f- 6 appliances	n/a	n/a
13/09/17	Campbellfield, 25-27 Bancell st /Bolinda Rd + Horne St	No	<1	n/a	2nd	n/a	n/a
2/10/17	Laverton North Norstar Steel Recycle	yes	<1	yes	2nd	n/a	n/a
13/12/17	Laverton North Norstar	yes	1	yes	3rd 40+ f/f -13 appliances	n/a	n/a
17/01/18	Somerton Tyrecycle	yes	<1	n/a	2nd	n/a	n/a
7/02/18	Laverton North Norstar	yes	1	yes	3rd 40+ f/f -13 appliances	n/a	n/a
28/02/18	Laverton North One Steel	yes	1	yes	3rd 40+ f/f -13 appliances	n/a	n/a
07/07/2018	SKM Coolaroo	yes	1	Yes	3 rd 40+ f/f -13 appliances	no	Possibly



30/08/2018	Tottenham 420 Somerville Road, Tottenham	No	16	no	8th 200+ F/f's in excess of 40 appliances	Yes- significant	Yes
26/9/18	Laverton North	yes	<1		2nd	No	n/a
4/11/18	Brooklyn Clean away	yes	<1	yes	2nd	n/a	n/a
12/12/18	Campbellfield Visy Ind.	yes	<1	yes	2nd	n/a	n/a
19/01/19	Campbellfield Colbert road	yes	2>	n/a	4th 70+F/f 20+ appliances	n/a	Possibly
24/1/19	Laverton North Global Recyclers	yes	<1	yes	2nd	n/a	n/a
27/2/19	SKM Laverton North	yes	<1	yes	2nd	n/a	n/a
29/3/19	SKM Coolaroo	yes	1	yes	2nd	n/a	n/a
5/04/19	Thornycroft St Campbellfield	yes	3>	yes	5th 100+ f/f's 30+ appliances	Yes	Yes
12/04/19	Coolaroo	yes	<1	yes	2nd	n/a	n/a
25/04/2019	(414) Somerville Road, Tottenham	yes	<1	n/a	2nd	n/a	n/a



MFB call data for categorisation of alarm level response

Alarm level	July 2016 to July 2017 (pre-task force)	August 2017 to August 2018 (task force operating)	Sept 2018 – April 2019
1 st	26	20	19
2 nd	5	4	8
3 rd	2	4	0
4 th + above	3	0	2



- 4.4 The cost of MFB responding to waste fires is significant. One recent example is the Tottenham Fire, where the direct cost to MFB for 'response' was \$4.38million, not including base costs. These costs included accommodation and flights for other fire agencies to assist, specialist cleaning of personal protective equipment, overtime and Senior Command costs, loaning equipment, use of foam and fuel, catering and appliance decontamination and cleaning. There would also be further costs attached to other agencies, including recovery costs, such as environmental rectification and recommissioning. For example, the cost of pumping waste water at one of our recent emergency responses to a waste fire exceeded \$1 million, which was paid by another agency as part of the 'recovery' costs.
- 4.5 Workforce health and safety is MFB's highest priority.⁷ MFB shares the concerns of its firefighters, and the United Firefighters Union, about the risks to health and safety posed by attending such fires. MFB's Chief Officer has a duty to dispatch appliances and personnel to such fires. MFB is developing standard operational procedures founded on operational risk assessments for reasonably foreseeable incident types. While this equips Incident Controllers with generic knowledge of hazards and risk controls, site-specific risk information gathered through pre-incident planning is highly desirable to inform incident ground decision making
- 4.6 Where possible, MFB puts in place pre-incident plans for known hazards and risks in order to control, eliminate or reduce risk. When pre-incident planning is not possible, MFB personnel use a dynamic risk assessment process to continually assess risk and put safety controls in place. MFB also provides post incident measures to monitor health and welfare.
- 4.7 MFB firefighters are required to make many hundreds of quick decisions when responding to a fire. They rely on their training and their assumptions about the way a fire will behave. When those assumptions are fundamentally challenged because the hazards are unknown or the risk is unquantifiable, it makes the fire response much more difficult and potentially much more dangerous. All MFB's practices are informed by training and experiences, which allows firefighters to determine the appropriate action in specific environments, under specific circumstances. Those practices often need to be reconsidered in toxic stockpile fires.
- 4.8 At regulated sites, such as Campbellfield, a pre-incident plan can address some of the risk. This does, however, require that MFB has a thorough knowledge of potential hazards. For unregulated sites, the degree of risk may be unknown due to the lack of manifest information and a misunderstanding of scale, such as in the Tottenham Fire. In such instances, it may take some time for MFB to convert the uncontrolled and indeterminate hazards into controlled and measurable risks. In both types of toxic stockpile fires, the senior firefighting officers on scene may hold personnel back in staging areas and allow a fire to burn for some time while assessing options and considering risk, in accordance with MFB's health and safety obligations. MFB recognises the consequential effect on the fire, the environment and the inconvenience to evacuated local residents. This approach is consistent with the State Emergency Management Priorities promulgated by Emergency Management Victoria.⁸

⁷ MFB Plan 2018-19, page 9.

⁸ The State Emergency Management Priorities are:

- Protection and preservation of life is paramount. This includes
 - Safety of emergency services personnel; and
 - Safety of community members including vulnerable community members and visitors/tourists located within the incident area
- Issuing of community information and community warnings detailing incident information that is timely, relevant and tailored to assist community members make informed decisions about their safety
- Protection of critical infrastructure and community assets that supports community resilience
- Protection of residential property as a place of primary residence
- Protection of assets supporting individual livelihoods and economic production that supports individual and community financial sustainability



- 4.9 MFB recognise that toxic stockpiles are significant for its personnel because they do not always know what they may have been exposed to. MFB will continue to work with relevant experts and adopt conservative safety measures to protect its people and continuously review its safety processes while, acknowledging that MFB firefighters and the community should not be exposed to fires such as these in 2019.

5. Regulatory issues

- 5.1 The problem of toxic stockpiles and waste fires is not new, and no doubt the Committee will be provided with details about the Parliament of Western Australia 2001 Bellevue Hazardous Waste Fire Inquiry, involving a site known as 'Waste Control'. The Chairperson of that inquiry made the following comments in that report, which are pertinent to the work of this Committee:

There can be no doubt that the Waste Control site at no time fully complied with its licence requirements and rarely, if ever, operated profitably....

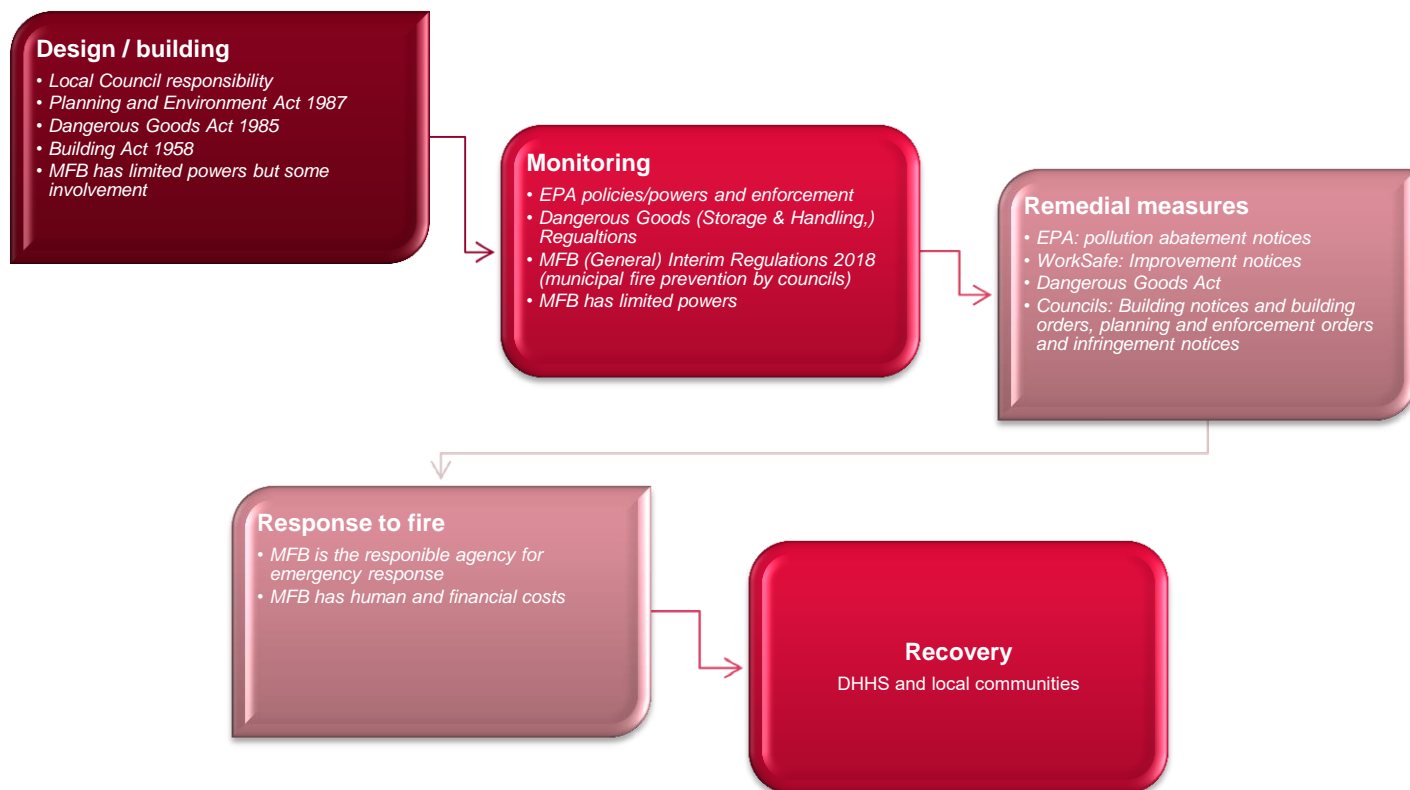
Quite clearly, in this case, unfettered market systems failed to deliver good outcomes for the community, for industry or for the environment. Rather than rid the State of its industrial waste dilemma, Waste Control compounded the problems and challenges of recycling, re-use and disposal of toxic and solvent wastes.

... The market, left to its own devices, failed to deal appropriately with the hazardous by-products of industrial and commercial processes. The regulating agencies, while sharing some information, operated in formal isolation from each other, notwithstanding significant areas of regulatory and/or enforcement responsibility overlap.

- 5.2 MFB does not say that there is this degree of regulatory isolation in Victoria and the work of the Taskforce illustrates that there is not. It was certainly not the case in Campbellfield, where there was considerable planning between agencies. It has however been MFB's experience that there has been instances of isolated decision making and deficiencies in information sharing across agencies. This may be a result of the range of different regulatory and enforcement powers sitting with different bodies.

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- Protection of environmental and conservation assets that considers the cultural, biodiversity and social values of the environment.

5.3 Figure 1 summarises the regulatory roles for regulated waste sites:



5.4 The MFB's powers and duties in relation to waste sites are limited, as shown below:

	Design / building phase	Ongoing monitoring / management of facility	Remedial powers when risks identified	Response to Fire
MFB's Role	<p>MFB has a limited statutory role. The MFB Chief Officer is a prescribed reporting authority for the issuing of a building permit / occupancy permit where proposed design departs from the deemed to satisfy provisions</p> <p>Only a fraction of all of the buildings constructed are required to have the report and consent of the Chief Officer under Building Regulation 129 and 187 and, therefore, MFB has no oversight of fire safety matters in relation to most new buildings built</p>	<p>MFB has limited powers in relation to the ongoing monitoring / management of a resource recovery facility. Many of its powers are available only after a fire</p> <p>It does have a limited power of entry to land for the purpose of ascertaining compliance with laws relating to the prevention of fire⁹</p> <p>The MFB Chief Officer has limited powers to ensure essential safety measures in buildings are being maintained</p>	<p>MFB also has limited powers to take remedial action against resource recovery facilities identified to pose a fire risk</p> <p>Unlikely that fire prevention notices will be widely available, as they do not apply to buildings or things in buildings</p>	<p>MFB is the emergency response agency for fires in the metropolitan district of Melbourne</p> <p>As the agency responsible for responding to a fire at a resource recovery facility, MFB bears the cost of this response</p>
Other regulatory powers	<p>Appropriate conditions on land use under the <i>Planning and Environment Act 1987</i> and the applicable planning schemes</p> <p>Building permits and occupancies permits issued under the <i>Building Act 1993</i>¹⁰</p> <p>Municipal fire prevention (MFP) activities undertaken by councils under Part 5 of the <i>MFB (General) Regulations 2018</i></p>	<p>Management of particular environmental risks through EPA policies under the <i>Environment Protection Act 1970</i></p> <p>Ensuring buildings used for this purpose are appropriately constructed, maintained and used under the Building Act 1993</p> <p>Council MFP officers can undertake enforcement to remove or manage the threat of a fire occurrence under Part 5 of the <i>MFB (General) Regulations 2018</i></p>	<p>Pollution abatement notices under the <i>Environment Protection Act 1970</i></p> <p>Building notices and building orders under the <i>Building Act 1993</i></p> <p>Improvement notices under the <i>Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004</i></p> <p>Exercise of Powers under the <i>Dangerous Goods Act 1985 (Vic)</i></p>	

⁹ Section 32 of the *Metropolitan Fire Brigade Act 1958 (Vic)*

¹⁰ The MFB notes that the effectiveness of building certification can depend on the building surveyor's knowledge of the intended use of the building (see the comments in the Inquest Findings, Comments and Recommendations into Fire and Nine Death at Kew Residential services on 8 April 1996 at part 5 for how similar issues arose in relation to building classification for the Kew site). There are possible gaps in the current National Construction Code and Buildings in the way they deal with waste sites. There can also be issues with the certification applying to a building but not to outdoor spaces.



- 5.5 To date, the work of the Taskforce and the related working groups has addressed the issues by site or groups of sites. In one instance, an agency has prepared separate Memoranda of Understanding with each other agency in relation to specified Dangerous Goods sites only. MFB observes that, unlike the emergency management sector which, after a number of reviews, adopts an 'all hazards, all agencies' approach, the work of agencies in this area, while well intentioned, is still somewhat separate.¹¹

6. Observations

- 6.1 This submission does not advocate for policy reform. MFB does, however, take this opportunity to note some of its experiences and reflect on common themes from the Campbellfield Fire and other fires.

- 6.2 Firstly, as indicated in 5.5 above, there may be an opportunity for a more comprehensive and inclusive approach to address waste industry issues.

Currently powers and duties are spread across agencies, and MFB has experienced questions, arising from time to time, as to which agency should act and which power should be used.

There does not exist, to MFB's knowledge, a comprehensive plan of all regulatory powers, what the triggers for action are (the 'hazard' based approach), and an indication of which agency will use which powers and when.

There does not exist, to MFB's knowledge, regulatory mapping and an agreement on risk triggers and likely regulatory responses. Such an exercise may deliver consistency using a coordinated risk management approach as the work of the Taskforce matures.¹²

There is not a manual (similar to the *Emergency Management Manual Victoria* which is accessible and used by all parties in that sector) or a Code of Practice.

- 6.3 Secondly, MFB will continue to seek opportunities to work across agencies and with experts on toxicity and occupant viability to inform risk modelling that could assist all parties with responsibility for enforcement of legislation relating to dangerous goods.

- 6.4 Lastly, MFB notes that it has power to charge attendance costs related to 'toxic' fires under the MFB Act. MFB has typically not utilised these provisions, but is likely to do so increasingly, given the significant costs involved.

7. Questions raised by Committee members

- 7.1 **Question of Ms Melina Bath: *When did you or the organisation first become aware of these excessive stockpiles?***

- 7.2 In recent years, MFB first became aware of 'excessive stockpiles' on 13 July 2017 as a result of a fire at SKM Recycling at Coolaroo.

¹¹ The MFB notes, for example the *Review of the 2010-11 Flood Warnings and Response -Final Report* conducted by Neil Comrie which made recommendations about a review of all emergency management legislation to focus on service interoperability to secure an 'all hazards, all agencies' capability, alongside an 'all hazards, all agencies' approach to incident response including clarity of responsibility and levels of response.

¹² The MFB notes that changes to the *Environmental Protection Act* which will come into effect next year will also increase the range of regulatory responses, and there is not mapping and risk management response work to occur both before and after those changes.

7.3 Prior to the Tottenham fire, there have been other excessive stockpiles fires that MFB responded to, including fires at Visy Paper at Coolaroo on 28 November 1996 and 20 January 1997, respectively, and a fire at Southern Rocycling at 71-85 Heatherdale Road, Ringwood on 31 March 2006. However, in recent years it was the fire at SKM Recycling at Coolaroo on 13 July 2017 that resulted in MFB becoming aware of current issues with excessive stockpiles waste fires and which led to the formation of the Taskforce.

7.4 **Question of Mr David Davis: Do you have a list of MFB’s referrals to the EPA regarding excessive stockpiles?**

7.5 The list of MFB referrals to the EPA regarding sites with excessive stockpiles is set out below:

Date of referral	Site	Address	Further information
12/10/2018	Polytrade	180 Maher Road, LAVERTON NORTH	Site had already been inspected by the Taskforce
15/1/2019	K&K	550 Geelong Road, BROOKLYN	EPA already aware of the site – Inspected and reported on 16/7/2018
20/3/2019	KE Engineering	2/30 Westside Drive, LAVERTON NORTH	
20/3/2019	Tollman	Maria Street, LAVERTON NORTH	
25/4/2019	SKM Recycling	413 Francis Street, BROOKLYN	Site had already been inspected and reported on by the Taskforce

7.6 **Question of Ms Georgie Crozier: Are you aware of the numbers [of MFB firefighters] that have been affected that have come with health implications from these ones?**¹³

7.7 MFB uses an incident/hazard reporting tool called ‘MFBSafe’. This tool allows MFB staff to report:

- a) a hazard or potential hazard that has the potential to cause harm, injury or damage; or
- b) an incident/near miss that could or did result in harm, injury or damage.

7.8 A person could make multiple entries into MFBSafe for one incident. For example, a person could make an MFBSafe report for a tripping hazard and a further MFBSafe report for inhalation of an unknown substance at the same emergency response incident.

7.9 Due to privacy, the health and personal information of our employees cannot be disclosed, except in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* or *Health Records Act 2001*. However, some MFBSafe reporting information has been provided below for the Campbellfield Fire and Tottenham Fire, fires which both comprised excessive stockpiles.

7.10 As at 21 May 2019, 67 MFBSafe reports have been logged in relation to the Campbellfield Fire. 52 reports relate to potential exposure, nine reports relate to sprain/strain type injuries and six reports relate to exposure type symptoms (eye/nose/throat irritation).

¹³ MFB understands ‘from these ones’ to refer to ‘from fires with excessive stockpiles’.



- 7.11 As at 21 May 2019, 609 MFBSafe reports have been logged in relation to the Tottenham Fire. 106 reports have been logged for exposure type symptoms. Reported symptoms included headaches, nose bleeds, itchy/red/stinging eyes, chemical taste in mouth, irritated throat, cold/flu symptoms and nausea/vomiting.
- 7.12 **Question of Ms Georgie Crozier: *Have you got data on the number of these fires that have been deemed to be suspicious?***
- 7.13 MFB does have data on the number of waste fires that have been deemed to be suspicious. However, due to MFB not always being notified of ongoing investigations by regulators such as Victoria Police, Worksafe and EPA, it will not publicly release this information so that it does not compromise any pending investigations.

8. Conclusion

MFB welcomes the opportunity to present this submission to the Committee and can provide further detail as required. MFB will continue to work to protect its firefighters and the community and will work with other agencies in the Taskforce to address the very real risks created by fires at toxic stockpiles.