



PREMIER'S PROMISE OF A FORMAL REVIEW NOT GOOD ENOUGH

Friday 16 January 2026 – A coalition of career and volunteer firefighters came together to call for an urgent Parliamentary Inquiry into the January 2026 Victorian fires.

The Premier has now responded with the promise of a formal review of Victoria's bushfire season led by the Inspector-General for Emergency Management (IGEM).

An IGEM review is not a substitute for a Parliamentary Inquiry.

An IGEM review cannot deliver the level of scrutiny, independence or public accountability that a Parliamentary Inquiry would provide. The questions Victorians are asking go well beyond operational lessons and directly into government decisions, funding priorities and ignored warnings.

The Allan Government could not even table the Country Fire Authority and Fire Rescue Victoria annual reports on time. They then attempted to shift the blame onto the Victorian Auditor-General's Office instead of accepting responsibility for their failures.

This bushfire season has raised serious questions about preparedness, funding cuts, ageing fire trucks, aerial firefighting capacity and whether repeated warnings from firefighters and volunteers were ignored by government.

Firefighters are not calling for a review to produce another list of recommendations that can be quietly delayed, ignored or not even tabled.

Victorians deserve a Parliamentary Inquiry that scrutinises, hears from communities in public, and delivers accountability that cannot be hidden.

Andrew Weidemann AM from the Across Victoria Alliance said this process needed to be transparent, not take place behind closed doors.

“Victorians deserve better than a Government marking their own homework and the way to achieve that is through a Parliamentary Inquiry.”

“A Parliamentary Inquiry is the only way to independently examine why repeated warnings from firefighters and communities were ignored.”

United Firefighters Union Secretary Peter Marshall said this inquiry was about Government accountability- something a formal review would not deliver.

“If a formal review by the Inspector General for Emergency Management was the best way to shine a light on what led to this fire crisis that's what firefighters would have asked for.”

“This is the Allan Government once again dodging real accountability by hiding behind political expediency and bureaucratic processes.”

John Houston President of CFA Volunteers Group Inc said frontline firefighters needed to be heard.

“A Parliamentary Inquiry gives volunteer and career firefighters an opportunity to have their voices heard in real time.”

“The Community and Volunteers are hurting out here, and we deserve to be heard. That will be an important part of healing from this and would be important part of a Parliamentary Inquiry.”

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