



Hon Ann Leahy MP  
Minister for Local Government and Water and  
Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers

Ref No: 01308-25 & QFS/63476

16 June 2025

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Mr Justin Choveaux  
General Manager  
Rural Fire Brigades Association Queensland Inc.

Email: [gm@rfbaq.org](mailto:gm@rfbaq.org)

Dear Mr Choveaux

Thank you for your email of 27 March 2025 requesting that I investigate the legislative reforms which commenced on 1 July 2024 and their impact on the status of rural fire brigades and the ownership of property used by those brigades.

I have asked Queensland Fire Department for advice so I can be better informed about the matters you have raised.

In the meantime, I note your reference to section 84 of the then *Fire and Emergency Services Act 1990* (FES Act). The legislative reforms which commenced on 1 July 2024 did not amend the wording or effect of this provision in any way, with the current section 142(2) of the *Fire Services Act 1990* (FS Act) providing that:

*All equipment provided by, or the purchase of which is subsidised by, the commissioner is and remains the property of the State and may at any time be repossessed by the commissioner.*

The position in relation to ownership of property covered by this provision therefore appears to be clear.

I note, however, that your email refers to a broader range of property used by rural fire brigades. To assist my investigation, I would be pleased to receive any detailed information you could provide about particular pieces or classes of property, the ownership of which you believe was impacted by the 2024 legislative reforms.

I further note your concerns that you consider that the legislative amendments resulted in the dissolution of 1,400 unincorporated associations.

I understand that prior to 1 July 2024, as rural fire brigades comprised of a group of members registered as a rural fire brigade under the FES Act, the brigades were identified as unincorporated associations. However, unlike other unincorporated associations, the operation of rural fire brigades was regulated by rural fire brigade rules made under the FES Act, covering areas such as membership, acquisitions and the vesting and disposal of properties and funds, thus complementing the rules generally applying to unincorporated associations.

Consequently, I understand that the effect of the legislative amendments merely changed the status of rural fire brigades from an unincorporated association regulated by the FES Act to that of entities formed as part of Rural Fire Service Queensland under the FS Act.

If you have any questions about my advice to you, please contact my office on 0424 683 186 or email [Angus.McCaffrey@ministerial.qld.gov.au](mailto:Angus.McCaffrey@ministerial.qld.gov.au).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ann Leahy', with a stylized, cursive script.

**ANN LEAHY MP**  
**Minister for Local Government and Water and**  
**Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers**