



MEDIA STATEMENT

Perth Hills Bushfires: No Opinion of Misconduct Against Commissioner of Police

15 June 2012

A Corruption and Crime Commission report has found evidence does not support a misconduct opinion against the Commissioner of Police, Dr Karl O'Callaghan, concerning his statements in relation to the Roleystone Fire in February 2011.

Mr Wayne Gregson, an Assistant Commissioner of Police, and now also Chief Executive Officer of FESA, said he telephoned Dr O'Callaghan at 2.13 p.m. on Monday 6 February 2011, having first obtained information about fires at Bentley and the Perth Hills, including Roleystone, and communicated that information to the Commissioner. Dr O'Callaghan said he did not get information about the Roleystone Fire during that conversation and was not made aware of the seriousness of the fires until he was called at 4.33 p.m. that day by Deputy Commissioner Chris Dawson.

On that afternoon Dr O'Callaghan was attending an international cricket match at the WACA. He convened a meeting of the State Emergency Coordination Group (SECG) – which coordinates emergency responses in the State – late that afternoon, and it took place at 6:30 p.m.

The Commission's report was tabled in the Parliament today.

While no lives were lost in the fire, 71 homes were destroyed, 39 were damaged and 517 families were evacuated.

The report found that it would have been prudent and more open for each of Dr O'Callaghan and Mr Gregson to have revealed the telephone conversation when giving evidence to the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee of the WA Parliament, in the interests of transparency, but they were under no obligation to do so.

A separate Commission investigation has found evidence does not support a misconduct opinion against Dr O'Callaghan in relation to the use of his corporate credit card.

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