

**Submission  
No 7**

## **ASSETS, PREMISES AND FUNDING OF THE NSW RURAL FIRE SERVICE**

**Organisation:** Uralla Shire Council

**Date Received:** 18 April 2024



Responsible Officer: GM  
In reply, please quote: UO/24/915

18 April 2024

**Uralla Shire Council Submission –  
NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into Assets, Premises and Funding of the NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS)**

Dear Committee members

It is noted the inquiry is examining the funding, maintenance, accounting, and operational management of assets and premises belonging to the NSW Rural Fire Service, including arrangements with councils.

Council expresses its support for this inquiry and appreciates the Public Accounts Committee's consideration of the issues outlined in this submission.

The Rural Fire Amendment Bill was presented to the NSW Parliament by the Member for Northern Tablelands, the Hon. Adam Marshall, in 2023. Council has repeatedly raised concerns about the financial burden of current accounting standards for rural fire assets, particularly for small rural councils, in recent years. Previous correspondence from the Council regarding these matters is attached documents.

There has been a long-standing dispute between Councils and the State Government over the accounting treatment of the Red Fleet. This came to a head with the Auditor-General's 2021 Report on Local Government issued on 22 June 2022: <https://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/our-work/reports/local-government-2021> The Report reinforced the State Government determination that RFS assets are the "property" of councils and must be recorded in Council's financial statements, with Council therefore required to absorb all depreciation costs. The Report applies more pressure on councils and the Office of Local Government (OLG) to conform with this determination, even though councils do not have effective management or control of these assets.

Councils across the State and LGNSW refute this determination. Councils do not have any say in the acquisition, deployment, or disposal of these assets. Comparable assets held by Fire & Rescue NSW (FRNSW) and the State Emergency Service (SES) are not vested anywhere other than with the organisations that purchase, use, maintain and dispose of them.

This submission endorses the comments made by the then CEO LGNSW in correspondence to the A/Deputy Secretary, Local Government, OLG dated 27 June 2023:

*"LGNSW is perplexed as to why the NSW Government is now taking such a hard line in insisting that the assets be recognised as local government property. It is logical that RFS assets be treated consistently and in the same way as assets of other emergency service agencies such as the State Emergency Service (SES) and Fire & Rescue NSW, with ownership vested in the respective agencies."*

*It is the clear position of LGNSW that councils should not record RFS mobile assets in their financial statements and LGNSW will continue to recommend that councils continue to consider their own position on this matter.*

*It is especially disappointing that contrary to its previous position the OLG is now requesting so many councils across NSW to divert already strained council resources to provide OLG with further information on strategies to respond to the nonsensical position that RFS mobile assets are not assets of the RFS. This diversion of resources will distract councils from their core work for the community and will not provide any public benefit.*

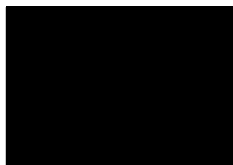
*Councils across NSW rely on the support of the OLG. I strongly urge the OLG to reconsider its current position on this matter and rightly recognise that RFS mobile assets should be recognised as assets of the RFS for accounting purposes – in line with the independent expert advice OLG commissioned on this matter in 2018.”*

[Red Fleet Assets 27 June 2023.pdf \(lgnsw.org.au\)](#)

Uralla Shire Council has raised its concerns regarding the State Government’s imposition of accountancy responsibilities for RFS assets in various Mayoral Minutes in 2022 and 2023, and in correspondence sent to Ministers and Opposition members during this period. Copies are attached for your reference.

We welcome your consideration of these issues and look forward to your findings.

Sincerely,



Toni Averay

**General Manager**

**Attachments:**

1. Mayoral Minute of 26 July 2022
2. Council letter sent to Hon. Adam Marshall, Treasurer Hon. Matt Kean, 3 August 2022
3. Mayoral Minute of 27 September 2022
4. Council letter sent to the Premier 1 December 2022
5. Council letter sent to the Leader of the Opposition 1 December 2022
6. Mayoral Minute of 23 May 2023
7. Council letters sent to the Minister for Emergency Services, the Minister for Local Government and local State members 3 August 2022 (form letter only)
8. Mayoral Minute of 24 October 2023
9. Council letter to Hon. Mr Adam Marshall 27 October 2023
10. Council letter to Minister for Local Government, Hon. Ron Hoenig 30 October 2023

## 10 WRITTEN REPORT FROM DELEGATES

### 10.1 WINTERBOURNE WIND FARM COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING 29 AUGUST 2022

**MOTION Moved: Cr Crouch /Seconded: Cr Burrows**

**That Council receives Winterbourne Wind Farm Community Consultative Committee Meeting 29 August 2022 Delegate Report.**

**For: Mayor Bell, Crs Bower, Burrows, Crouch, Doran, McMullen, O'Connor, Petrov, Toomey**

**Against: Nil**

**Absent: Nil**

**02.09/22 CARRIED**

### 10.2 RURAL SKILLS FORUM UPDATE

**MOTION Moved: Cr Crouch /Seconded: Cr Doran**

**That Council receives Rural Skills Forum Update Delegate Report.**

**For: Mayor Bell, Crs Bower, Burrows, Crouch, Doran, McMullen, O'Connor, Petrov, Toomey**

**Against: Nil**

**Absent: Nil**

**03.09/22 CARRIED**

### 10.3 ACTIVITIES SUMMARIES

As tabled.

## 11 MAYORAL MINUTE

### 11.1 ACCOUNTING TREATMENT OF RURAL FIRE SERVICE ('REDFLEET') ASSETS REPLY – CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

**MOTION Moved: Mayor Bell /Seconded: Cr Toomey**

- i. **That Council receives the Mayoral Minute and notes the information presented by the Office for Police and Emergency Services;**
- ii. **That Council write to the Premier and Leader of the Opposition in an ongoing effort to overturn the illogical advice on the management of RFS assets.**

**For: Mayor Bell, Crs Bower, Burrows, Crouch, Doran, McMullen, O'Connor, Petrov, Toomey**

**Against: Nil**

**Absent: Nil**

**04.09/22 CARRIED**

3 August 2022

The Hon. Matthew Kean MP  
Treasurer and Minister for Energy  
GPO Box 5341  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

*Via email only*

Dear Mr Kean,

Uralla Shire Council is seeking your support on the local government campaign on the financial accounting treatment of Rural Fire Service (RFS) mobile assets known as the 'Red Fleet' and our resolution of Council made at the Ordinary Meeting held 26 July 2022.

As you would be aware there has been a long-standing dispute over the accounting treatment of the Red Fleet has come to a head with the Auditor-General's 2021 Report on Local Government on 22 June 2022. The Audit Report reemphasises the State Government determination that RFS assets are the "property" of councils and must be recorded in Council's financial statements with Council required to therefore absorb all depreciation costs.

The *Audit Office Local Government Report* is now applying more pressure on councils and the Office of Local Government (OLG) to conform with their determination, even though councils do not have effective management or control of these assets.

At the Ordinary Council Meeting of 26 July 2022 the attached Mayoral Minute was considered and the following was resolved unanimously:

**That Council:**

- I. **Writes to the local State Member(s) Hon Adam Marshall MP, the Treasurer the Hon Matt Kean MP, Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience the Hon Stephanie Cook MP and the Minister for Local Government Wendy Tuckerman MP:**
  - a. **Expressing Council's objection to the NSW Government's determination on ownership of Rural Fire Service assets;**
  - b. **Advising of the impact of the Government's position on Council finances of this accounting treatment;**
  - c. **Informing that Council may not carry out RFS assets stocktakes on behalf of the NSW Government and may not record RFS assets in Uralla Shire Council's financial statements;**
  - d. **Call on the NSW Government to take immediate action to permanently clear up inequities and inconsistencies around the accounting treatment of Rural Fire Service**

(RFS) assets by acknowledging that rural firefighting equipment is vested in, under the control of and the property of the RFS; and

- e. Amend s119 of the *Rural Fires Act 1997* so that the effect is to make it clear that RFS assets are not the property of councils.
- II. Writes to the Shadow Treasurer Daniel Mookhey MLC, the Shadow Minister for Emergency Services Jihad Dib MP, the Shadow Minister for Local Government Greg Warren MP, the Greens Spokesperson for Local Government Jamie Parker MP and the leaders of the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers, Animal Justice and One Nation parties Robert Borsak MLC, Emma Hurst MLC and Mark Latham MLC:
    - a. Advising Members of Uralla Shire Council's position, including providing copies of correspondence to NSW Government Ministers; and
    - b. Seeking Members' commitments to support NSW Councils' call to amend the *Rural Fires Act 1997* as set out in correspondence.
  - III. Writes to the Auditor General advising that notwithstanding any overtures of future qualified audits, it may not carry out RFS stocktakes on behalf of the NSW Government and may not record RFS assets in Uralla Shire Council's financial statements, noting that the State Government's own Local Government Accounting *Code of Practice and Financial Reporting* provides for councils to determine whether or not they record the RFS assets as council assets.
  - IV. Promotes these messages via its digital and social media channels and via its networks.
  - V. Re-affirms its complete support of and commitment to local RFS brigades noting that Uralla Shire Council's action is entirely directed towards the NSW Government's nonsensical position that rather than being owned and controlled by local brigades, RFS assets are somehow controlled by councils, which councils consider to be a cynical financial sleight of hand abdicating the NSW Government's responsibilities at the cost of local communities.
  - VI. Affirms its support to Local Government NSW (LGNSW) and requests LGNSW continue advocating on Council's behalf to get clarification finally from the State Government about the accounting treatment of RFS assets.

Council looks forward to a legislative resolution to this outstanding matter.

Sincerely,



Robert Bell  
Mayor

## 10 WRITTEN REPORT FROM DELEGATES

### 10.1 WINTERBOURNE WIND FARM COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING 29 AUGUST 2022

**MOTION Moved: Cr Crouch /Seconded: Cr Burrows**

**That Council receives Winterbourne Wind Farm Community Consultative Committee Meeting 29 August 2022 Delegate Report.**

**For: Mayor Bell, Crs Bower, Burrows, Crouch, Doran, McMullen, O'Connor, Petrov, Toomey**

**Against: Nil**

**Absent: Nil**

**02.09/22 CARRIED**

### 10.2 RURAL SKILLS FORUM UPDATE

**MOTION Moved: Cr Crouch /Seconded: Cr Doran**

**That Council receives Rural Skills Forum Update Delegate Report.**

**For: Mayor Bell, Crs Bower, Burrows, Crouch, Doran, McMullen, O'Connor, Petrov, Toomey**

**Against: Nil**

**Absent: Nil**

**03.09/22 CARRIED**

### 10.3 ACTIVITIES SUMMARIES

As tabled.

## 11 MAYORAL MINUTE

### 11.1 ACCOUNTING TREATMENT OF RURAL FIRE SERVICE ('REDFLEET') ASSETS REPLY – CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED

**MOTION Moved: Mayor Bell /Seconded: Cr Toomey**

- i. **That Council receives the Mayoral Minute and notes the information presented by the Office for Police and Emergency Services;**
- ii. **That Council write to the Premier and Leader of the Opposition in an ongoing effort to overturn the illogical advice on the management of RFS assets.**

**For: Mayor Bell, Crs Bower, Burrows, Crouch, Doran, McMullen, O'Connor, Petrov, Toomey**

**Against: Nil**

**Absent: Nil**

**04.09/22 CARRIED**

1 December 2022

NSW Premier Dominic Perrottet

Via email: [premier@dpc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:premier@dpc.nsw.gov.au)

RE: ACCOUNTING TREATMENT OF RURAL FIRE SERVICE ('REDFLEET') ASSETS

Dear Mr Perrottet,

Uralla Shire Council, as have other Councils, written and expressed our ongoing concerns in regard to the accounting treatment of Rural Fire Service (RedFleet) Assets respective Police & Emergency Services and State Ministers, including our local member for Northern Tablelands Adam Marshall.

Council has now resolved in 27 September Ordinary Meeting :

*ii. That Council write to the Premier and Leader of the Opposition in an ongoing effort to overturn the illogical advice on the management of RFS assets Res#04.09/22*

Specific concern relates to the Auditor-General's recommendation in the Local Government 2021 report to Parliament. Whilst the RFS is stating it values council's contribution to the bushfire management and has commitment to working in collaboration with all councils it has not demonstrated any movement to support issue of amending the Rural Fires Act 1997.

As you would be aware Local Governments Accounting Code of Practice and Financial Reporting provides for councils to determine whether or not they record the RFS assets as council assets. This is all promoted via digital and social media channels and via its own networks.

Uralla Shire Council is asking that you as Premier NSW affirm your support to Local Government NSW (LGNSW) and requests you advocate on Council's behalf to get clarification from our government (NSW State Government) about the account treatment of RFS Assets.

Yours Sincerely



Robert Bell

Mayor, Uralla Shire





P: 02 6778 6300

F: 02 6778 6349

E: [council@uralla.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@uralla.nsw.gov.au)

32 Salisbury St, Uralla NSW 2358

PO Box 106, Uralla NSW 2358

ABN: 55 868 272 018

Responsible Officer: EA

In reply, please quote: UO/22/4639

1 December 2022

NSW Opposition Leader Chris Minns

Via email: [leader.opposition@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:leader.opposition@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

RE: ACCOUNTING TREATMENT OF RURAL FIRE SERVICE ('REDFLEET') ASSETS

Dear Mr Minns,

Uralla Shire Council, as have other Councils, written and expressed our ongoing concerns in regard to the accounting treatment of Rural Fire Service (RedFleet) Assets respective Police & Emergency Services and State Ministers, including our local member for Northern Tablelands Adam Marshall.

Council has now resolved in 27 September Ordinary Meeting :

*ii. That Council write to the Premier and Leader of the Opposition in an ongoing effort to overturn the illogical advice on the management of RFS assets Res#04.09/22*

Specific concern relates to the Auditor-General's recommendation in the Local Government 2021 report to Parliament. Whilst the RFS is stating it values council's contribution to the bushfire management and has commitment to working in collaboration with all councils it has not demonstrated any movement to support issue of amending the Rural Fires Act 1997.

As you would be aware Local Governments Accounting Code of Practice and Financial Reporting provides for councils to determine whether or not they record the RFS assets as council assets. This is all promoted via digital and social media channels and via its own networks.

Uralla Shire Council is asking that you as Opposition Leader NSW affirm your support to Local Government NSW (LGNSW) and requests you advocate on Council's behalf to get clarification from our government (NSW State Government) about the account treatment of RFS Assets.

Yours Sincerely,



/ Robert Bell

Mayor, Uralla Shire

- For:** Crs Robert Bell, Robert Crouch, Tim Bower, Sarah Burrows, Bruce McMullen, Tom O'Connor and Tara Toomey
- Against:** Nil
- Absent:** Crs Leanne Doran and Lone Petrov

CARRIED 7/0

## 9 WRITTEN REPORTS FROM DELEGATES

Nil

## 10 PUBLIC FORUM

Nil

Councillor Doran joined the meeting at 4:04pm

## 11 MAYORAL MINUTE

### 11.1 MAYORAL MINUTE - DAMAGING INCREASE IN EMERGENCY SERVICES LEVY COSTS

#### RESOLUTION 10.05/23

**Moved:** Mayor Robert Bell  
**Seconded:** Cr Tom O'Connor

**That Council writes to:**

1. Treasurer, the Minister for Emergency Services, the Minister for Local Government and local State Member(s):
  - a. Expressing Council's strong opposition to the NSW Government's last minute decision to impose an enormous Emergency Services Levy (ESL) cost increase on councils for 2023/24 by scrapping the ESL subsidy for councils and at a time after Council has publicly advertised its Operational Plan and annual budget to the community;
  - b. Noting that as a consequence of the unannounced 73% increase in the State Emergency Service budget and an 18% increase in the Fire and Rescue NSW budget, Council's 3.7% rate increase to provide essential community services and infrastructure has been significantly eroded.
  - c. Advising that the Government's decision may/will lead to a reduction in important local services and/or the cancellation of necessary infrastructure projects;
  - d. Calling on the NSW Government to take immediate action to:
    - i. restore the ESL subsidy in 2023/24
    - ii. urgently introduce legislation to decouple the ESL from the rate peg to enable councils to recover the full cost

- iii. develop a fairer, more transparent and financially sustainable method of funding critically important emergency services in consultation with local government.
2. Chair of the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) advising that Council's forced emergency services contribution is manifestly disproportionate to the 2023/24 rate cap, which has resulted in additional financial stress.
3. President of LGNSW seeking the Association's ongoing advocacy to bring about a relief in the burden of Councils' emergency services contribution.

**For:** Crs Robert Bell, Robert Crouch, Tim Bower, Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Bruce McMullen, Tom O'Connor and Tara Toomey

**Against:** Nil

**Absent:** Crs Lone Petrov

CARRIED 8/0

## 12 NOTICE OF MOTION/QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

Nil

## 13 REPORT OF COMMITTEES

Nil

## 14 REPORTS TO COUNCIL

### 14.1 DRAFT TREE MANAGEMENT POLICY FOR COUNCIL-MANAGED LAND 2023

#### RESOLUTION 11.05/23

**Moved:** Cr Bruce McMullen

**Seconded:** Cr Leanne Doran

That Council lays the item the Tree Management Policy for Council-managed Land on the table.

**For:** Crs Robert Bell, Robert Crouch, Tim Bower, Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Bruce McMullen, Tom O'Connor and Tara Toomey

**Against:** Nil

**Absent:** Crs Lone Petrov

CARRIED 8/0

3 August 2022

FORM LETTER EXAMPLE SENT TO MINISTERS

The Hon. Steph Cooke MP  
Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience  
GPO Box 5341  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

*Via email only*

Dear Ms Cooke,

Uralla Shire Council is seeking your support on the local government campaign on the financial accounting treatment of Rural Fire Service (RFS) mobile assets known as the 'Red Fleet' and our resolution of Council made at the Ordinary Meeting held 26 July 2022.

As you would be aware there has been a long-standing dispute over the accounting treatment of the Red Fleet has come to a head with the Auditor-General's 2021 Report on Local Government on 22 June 2022. The Audit Report reemphasises the State Government determination that RFS assets are the "property" of councils and must be recorded in Council's financial statements with Council required to therefore absorb all depreciation costs.

The *Audit Office Local Government Report* is now applying more pressure on councils and the Office of Local Government (OLG) to conform with their determination, even though councils do not have effective management or control of these assets.

At the Ordinary Council Meeting of 26 July 2022 the attached Mayoral Minute was considered and the following was resolved unanimously:

**That Council:**

- I. **Writes to the local State Member(s) Hon Adam Marshall MP, the Treasurer the Hon Matt Kean MP, Minister for Emergency Services and Resilience the Hon Stephanie Cook MP and the Minister for Local Government Wendy Tuckerman MP:**
  - a. **Expressing Council's objection to the NSW Government's determination on ownership of Rural Fire Service assets;**
  - b. **Advising of the impact of the Government's position on Council finances of this accounting treatment;**
  - c. **Informing that Council may not carry out RFS assets stocktakes on behalf of the NSW Government and may not record RFS assets in Uralla Shire Council's financial statements;**
  - d. **Call on the NSW Government to take immediate action to permanently clear up inequities and inconsistencies around the accounting treatment of Rural Fire Service**

(RFS) assets by acknowledging that rural firefighting equipment is vested in, under the control of and the property of the RFS; and

- e. Amend s119 of the *Rural Fires Act 1997* so that the effect is to make it clear that RFS assets are not the property of councils.
- II. Writes to the Shadow Treasurer Daniel Mookhey MLC, the Shadow Minister for Emergency Services Jihad Dib MP, the Shadow Minister for Local Government Greg Warren MP, the Greens Spokesperson for Local Government Jamie Parker MP and the leaders of the Shooters, Fishers and Farmers, Animal Justice and One Nation parties Robert Borsak MLC, Emma Hurst MLC and Mark Latham MLC:
    - a. Advising Members of Uralla Shire Council's position, including providing copies of correspondence to NSW Government Ministers; and
    - b. Seeking Members' commitments to support NSW Councils' call to amend the *Rural Fires Act 1997* as set out in correspondence.
  - III. Writes to the Auditor General advising that notwithstanding any overtures of future qualified audits, it may not carry out RFS stocktakes on behalf of the NSW Government and may not record RFS assets in Uralla Shire Council's financial statements, noting that the State Government's own Local Government Accounting *Code of Practice and Financial Reporting* provides for councils to determine whether or not they record the RFS assets as council assets.
  - IV. Promotes these messages via its digital and social media channels and via its networks.
  - V. Re-affirms its complete support of and commitment to local RFS brigades noting that Uralla Shire Council's action is entirely directed towards the NSW Government's nonsensical position that rather than being owned and controlled by local brigades, RFS assets are somehow controlled by councils, which councils consider to be a cynical financial sleight of hand abdicating the NSW Government's responsibilities at the cost of local communities.
  - VI. Affirms its support to Local Government NSW (LGNSW) and requests LGNSW continue advocating on Council's behalf to get clarification finally from the State Government about the accounting treatment of RFS assets.

Council looks forward to a legislative resolution to this outstanding matter.

Sincerely,

Robert Bell  
Mayor

**11 MAYORAL MINUTE****11.1 MAYORAL MINUTE - UPDATE ON NSW RURAL FIRES AMENDMENT (RED FLEET) BILL 2023****RESOLUTION 04.10/23****Moved: Mayor Robert Bell****Seconded: Cr Bruce McMullen****That Council:**

- 1. Notes the second reading of the NSW Rural Fires Amendment (Red Fleet) Bill 2023 on 12 October 2023.**
- 2. Thanks Mr Adam Marshall for his continued support for NSW local councils on this issue.**
- 3. Writes to Minister for Local Government, the Hon. Ron Hoenig, to express Council's support for the Private Member's Bill, and to invite Minister Hoenig to visit the Northern New England region to meet with local Mayors to discuss this issue further.**

**For: Crs Robert Bell, Robert Crouch, Tim Bower, Sarah Burrows, Leanne Doran, Bruce McMullen, Tom O'Connor, Lone Petrov and Tara Toomey**

**Against: Nil**

**CARRIED 9/0**

CONFIDENTIAL

Responsible Officer: EA

In reply, please quote: UO/23/3744

30 October 2023

The Hon. Adam Marshall MP  
Member for Northern Tablelands  
PO Box 77  
ARMIDALE NSW 2350

Via email only: [northerntablelands@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:northerntablelands@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Mr Marshall,

**Re: NSW Rural Fires Amendment (Red Fleet) Bill 2023/24**

Council would like to sincerely thank you for the support you have given in addressing the long standing dispute over the accounting treatment of the RFS assets, known as the Red Fleet.

Your Private Member's Bill proposing an amendment to the Rural Fires Act 1997 to transfer ownership of NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) vehicles, fire trucks and buildings from local councils back to the State Government is greatly appreciated by Uralla Shire Council.

We thank you for your efforts and confirm our strongest support for your continued efforts in moving this bill through Parliament.

Sincerely,



Robert Bell  
Mayor

Responsible Officer: EA  
In reply, please quote: UO/23/3707

30 October 2023

The Hon. Ron Hoenig, MP  
Minister for Local Government  
GPO Box 5341  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

via email: [office@hoenig.minister.nsw.gov.au](mailto:office@hoenig.minister.nsw.gov.au)  
[heffron@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:heffron@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Minister,

**Re: NSW Rural Fires Amendment (Red Fleet) Bill 2023/24**

Uralla Shire Council is seeking your support for the Private Member's Bill submitted by the Member for New England, the Hon. Adam Marshall, MP, proposing a change to the accounting treatment of Rural Fire Service (FRS) mobile assets known as 'Red Fleet'.

As you are aware, there has been a long-standing dispute over the accounting treatment of the Red Fleet that came to a head with the Auditor-General's 2021 Report on Local Government on 22 June 2022. The Audit Office Local Government Report is now applying more pressure on councils and the Office of Local Government (OLG) to conform with their determination even though councils do not have effective management or control of these assets.

The Private Member's Bill proposes amending the Rural Fires Act 1997 to transfer the ownership of NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) vehicles, fire trucks and buildings from local councils back to the State Government. This will reverse what is a significant financial burden on councils, particularly smaller rural councils like Uralla.

On behalf of my fellow Councillors and Northern New England Mayors, I would like to invite you to visit our region to meet with local Mayors to discuss this issue further. As this is an issue of



significance for our councils, we would appreciate the opportunity to introduce you to our region and the impacts the current requirements are having on our councils.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely,



Robert Bell  
**Mayor Uralla Shire Council**

cc:

Hon. Adam Marshall, MP - [northerntablelands@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:northerntablelands@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

Mayor Walcha Council – Mr Eric Noakes [council@walcha.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@walcha.nsw.gov.au)

Mayor Armidale Regional Council – Mr Sam Coupland [council@armidale.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@armidale.nsw.gov.au)