



## NEWS

# Cancer does not discriminate

By **Ben Brennan**

A MURRAY Mallee parliamentarian and Country Fire Service (CFS) volunteer has added his voice to a call for greater protection for regional fire fighters.

State Member for Hammond Adrian Pederick has been a member of the Coomandook Country Fire Service brigade for more than 10 years and said he would like to see equity under a law designed to give fire fighters access to compensation for cancer caused during the work. The State Government has argued that the scheme should only apply to Metropolitan Fire Service members because there

was insufficient evidence to suggest CFS members were as susceptible to the cancers covered by the system.

“The only way that argument stacks up is in the sheer volume of fires that professional fire fighters attend,” Mr Pederick said.

“But where that argument falls down is you can be exposed at just one or two incidents to dangerous smoke or asbestos from a collapsing ceiling.”

Mr Pederick said colleagues in his brigade were also concerned about the law’s failure to put them on equal footing with their professional counterparts.

His comments come after Mr Pederick’s colleague, Opposition Emergency Services Spokeswoman Vicki

Chapman called on the Government to support an amendment to the compensation scheme.

“Cancer does not distinguish between a paid fire fighter and a volunteer fire fighter,” she said.

“There are 14,500 CFS volunteers in South Australia and they deserve the same access to the same protection as paid fire fighters.”

Greens MP Tammy Franks has also been an outspoken critic over the State Government’s refusal to extend the scheme to South Australian volunteers.