

## Brief history

The *Fire Brigades Act 1890* created two boards, a Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board for the metropolitan fire district, and a Country Fire Brigades Board (CFBB) to embrace the nine country fire districts. The Act gave CFBB extensive powers and responsibilities for fire brigades based more than 16 kilometres from Melbourne CBD. The CFBB officially came into being on 1 January 1891.

In 1926, following serious bushfires, the Bush Fire Brigades were formed. Made up entirely of volunteer members, they were administered by the State Forests Department. They had only scant power to carry out fire prevention measures and received little or no financial assistance from the Government.

In 1939, the Stretton Royal Commission was established to investigate the devastating and disastrous Black Friday bush fires across Victoria. The report made a number of significant recommendations, including the need for a single firefighting organisation for country Victoria. The devastation of the 1944 bushfires emphasised the urgency of better coordination of country fire services. Legislation was enacted to establish a single country fire authority and the Country Fire Authority (CFA) began operations on 2 April 1945.