



**Metropolitan Fire and
Emergency Services Board**
ABN 28 598 558 561

*Victorian Emergency
Management Training Centre*
284 – 290 Hume Highway
Craigieburn
Victoria Australia 3064

Tuesday 27th June 2017

Dear Committee Members,

RE: Fire Services Reform

My name is Graeme Gant of [REDACTED] I have been a professional Fire Fighter for 32 years and I am a Commander employed with the Melbourne Metropolitan Fire Brigade.

My current role is overseeing the delivery of Recruit Fire Fighter Training at the Victorian Emergency Services Training Facility Craigieburn, and I have a comprehensive understanding of both the MFB and CFA service delivery models.

As a resident of an outer Melbourne suburb in the growth corridor of the North I have serious concerns for the community safety of the residents that reside in these growth corridors and for the residents of rural cities of Victoria.

The service delivery model from the Fire Service for these area's do not meet the service delivery model from a Fire Service of inner Melbourne.

Areas of concern to community safety are:

- Lack of career staff to meet minimum response times.
- Distance between nearest career staff stations for back up.
- Career staff reliant on volunteer response to sustain safe levels of crewing to combat an incident.
- No capability to respond to Medical Emergencies, EMR response is provided to inner Melbourne residents.
- Current CFA service delivery model requires specialised appliances to respond from the nearest CFA station and not the closest available appliance i.e (Ladder Platform from a MFB station maybe closer)
- In Melbourne's outer metro belt, the system only provides for one professional crew to attend a fire, backed up by volunteers, if they are available. This isn't enough to successfully protect families and properties in these areas.

Growth areas of Victoria require a modernised fire service to deliver a better community safety model. There is planning in these areas for infrastructure, hospitals, schools and industry however no planning as to delivering a community safety model to ensure safety of residents in these areas.

Historically, boundaries have been established to help emergency services, firefighters, police, ambulance and SES - respond to emergencies.

Victoria's fire service boundaries were established in the 1890s when our population was smaller and concentrated around Melbourne.

Today, there are 35 highly urbanized areas that are still zoned as 'country Victoria' under these antiquated fire boundaries - these areas require a rapid urban fire response.

What is the 'urban fire response' that these areas need? An 8 minute response time and 7 professional firefighters on two fire trucks - this is the minimum standard needed for emergency response to maximise the potential to save lives and minimise damage to property.

But this rapid response under 8 minutes is only guaranteed in Melbourne's metropolitan fire district. In this zone, specially trained professional career firefighters are in fire stations that have been strategically located to be able to respond within 8 minutes.

As a resident of Craigieburn that has a population of 50,864 (2017) with predicted growth to 64,236 (2041) an increase of 26.28%. We require and deserve a better quality community safety model.

Yours sincerely

Graeme Gant AFSM

Commander Training Delivery
VEMTC

Victorian Emergency Management Training Centre

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284-290, Hume Hwy, Craigieburn, VIC 3064

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