

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees,

INQUIRY INTO THE FIREFIGHTERS' PRESUMPTIVE RIGHTS COMPENSATION AND FIRE SERVICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (REFORM) BILL 2017

I am Qualified Fire Fighter with the Country Fire Authority for four years. My specialist qualifications include High Angle Rescue and Ground Observations.

I live in Clifton Springs and work in Geelong City Fire Brigade. Previous to this address I have lived in Warrnambool, Bright and Clifton Hill, thus have lived in communities that involve both Career and Volunteer Fire Fighters and only MFB response areas. I have also worked at, Warrnambool, Pakenham and Ocean Grove Fire Brigades

I am writing this submission in support of the proposed reform of the fire services for the following reasons:

Since being in the job, I have noticed how often incidents can be very time critical. I have responded to multiple Motor Vehicle Accidents that required very quick response times. The incidents that where a quick response occurred, lives were saved. Incidents where time taken to arrive on scene was greater than 8min and then even 20min for rescue units to arrive to "cut out" casualties, people have passed away. Lives get lost.

Even in my short time in the job (4years), there have been countless incidents where life or property could have been saved by quicker response times and better fire rescue services.

The Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV) reform will no doubt save more lives and protect communities. It will do this by building a Fire and Rescue Service that guarantees backup by having two trucks with at least 7 firefighters dispatched within 8 minutes.

The training for FRV will become standardised for all career staff, leading to increase in interoperability. Recent statics show major events are on the increase. Interoperability is extremely important for communications across all emergency service. The reform creates standardisation of training, equipment and communication systems. Currently during an Incidents when CFA respond into MFB area's they use different radio's, different equipment etc. We still have to operate as two separate fire services side by side. If we have the same operation effective response and communication will happen quicker.

The 35 integrated stations are in now highly urbanised, residential and industrial areas, which increase the risks. For example where I live in Clifton Springs, in 2 years I have seen a hug increase in residential dwelling, a ferry port in Portarlington, new farming industries and yet we still have the same response capacity. We need a modern Fire service that is prepared and ready, not one that is still reacting.

By employing all career firefighters in one fire service will not affect volunteer turnout or surge capacity by still providing integrated fire station. Volunteer support will be maintained with operational firefighters, such as Operational Officer being employed by FRV but continuing their role's under CFA. Training and brigade support for CFA

volunteers will improve with the new reform with tailor training, improve training facilities. The reform will not affect volunteer brigade response or the bushfire response.

Volunteer firefighters and each brigade have different requirements and need in compared to Intergrated/Career Brigades. By separating Career Firefighter from Volunteers, brigades needs can tailor and met easily and effective.

Personally it's not about who gets my vote. It is about what is best for our community and the FRV reform will create positive and effective operational changes and increased support for volunteers. The move towards this reform will also create a shift in the current negative culture that exists between volunteers and career firefighters.

I really urge you to look at this fire rescue reform with the point of view, of what is best for Victorians. Support this FRV reform to build a world class modern fire service that is ready to respond in time to incidents; small or big to save lives and property. Let Volunteers become proud of the CFA and work with the new FRV service.

Yours sincerely,

Tanya Faux

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