

**Kirra Vanzetti**

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**From:** Mark Caton [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, 30 June 2017 2:32 PM  
**To:** LCSC  
**Subject:** FIRE SERVICES LEGISLATION

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees,

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

I am Mark Caton, a Leading Fire Fighter from Craigieburn Fire Brigade within the CFA. I have been involved with the CFA for over 7 years and have numerous specialist qualifications with aerial appliances, hazmat, rope rescue etc. in which are required to perform my role on a regular basis. Not only have I completed a very stringent, complex and physically demanding 16 week recruit course at Fiskville, but I also complete daily training and maintain a high level of fitness to competently fulfil my role on station.

I live in Lancefield and work in Craigieburn.

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

As a fire fighter it is important to have guaranteed backup - guaranteed that two trucks with at least 7 fire fighters will be dispatched within 90 seconds and on scene within 8 minutes.

This response means better community safety and protection.

Employing all career firefighters in one fire service will not affect volunteer turnout or surge capacity as both services will be dispatched to attend incidents in the brigades primary and support areas, meaning an appliance from either service will be on scene quicker.

The reform areas are around the 35 integrated stations primary response areas – no effect on other volunteer brigades or bushfire response as response tables for other CFA brigades will not change, however the new fire service response tables will be adjusted to accommodate the newly implemented EMR.

The 35 integrated areas are now highly urbanised – high residential and other risks, meaning a larger and quicker response (within 90 seconds and on scene in less than 8 minutes) will better benefit the community in their time of distress.

Volunteer support will be maintained with operational fire fighters (OO's OMs etc being employed by the new fire service but continuing their roles through an arrangement with CFA)

The reform will benefit volunteers as it has included a package to assist with volunteer recruitment and retention across the CFA; and includes funding for volunteer station upgrades etc

The reform will assist with standardisation of career training/specialist response/response standards and equipment etc

I can't stress enough, the damage the FIRE SERVICE REFORM dispute in the workplace has had on my workplace and other colleagues as well as the additional strain it has had on myself and my

family. There are times when I ask myself "Is it worth risking my life for a set part of the community whom have no respect for the organisation I work for, the union I am proud to be a part of, the training and skillset I must enhance and maintain, the social and life events that I am unable to attend due to shift work and the risks and dangers that I am exposed too on a regular basis and greatly increasing my exposure to health affecting cancers most likely resulting in my premature DEATH!

I ask you – Would you do my job knowing you will most likely lose a large portion of your previous life style and have to give up many of the hobbies and interests you have loved for your entire life and then significantly increase your chances of developing debilitating health issues and leaving your family with NO husband/wife, dad/mother, son/daughter?

**I would suggest NOT.**

This is why I urge you to create a bigger and better fire service that will provide for better safety on the fire ground and give the community what they deserve and pay for – 2 fire services that can grow and change with the ever increasing population of Victoria, that will quickly and adequately protect people in their time of need.

Regards,

Mark.

**Mark Caton** Leading Firefighter - Craigieburn Fire Station

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