

To: Fire Services Bill Select Committee 2017

I am a Leading Firefighter with the Metropolitan Fire Brigade.

I have 10 years' experience and am a specialist operator of Heavy Rescue, High Angle Rescue and Waterways Emergency Responder.

I am university qualified and have dedicated myself to emergency services following a career in the medical and pharmaceutical industry.

I am lucky as I live in the inner north of Melbourne and feel comfortable about my fire services and level of protection. I am a father of two young children I know that I will have the MFB attend well within 8 minutes if there were to be a fire or other emergency at my home. In fact, once in the early hours of a weekday morning my wife and I woke to my daughter (who was two years old) experiencing extreme breathing difficulties. We called 000 immediately. MFB arrived within a few minutes and commenced oxygen therapy followed closely by Ambulance Victoria. I would hate to think what could have happened if this rapid response was not available. So, I support and believe that increasing the metropolitan district for better response should be a right for the whole community.

As a Leading Firefighter, I can be designated the Incident Controller if I am commanding the first appliance on scene. There is an endless list of situations where the first few minutes are crucial when information gathering as to the safety of myself, crew, injured and public. Such as 'smell of gas', fuel leaking from a vehicle incident, train or tram incident where DC power lines may be impinged, smoke issuing from a window (possibility of flash over / explosion). Whilst we have safety procedures in place, if something were to go wrong I know that I have the back-up of the oncoming crew. This wouldn't be the case if there were not 7 firefighters responding to the fireground.

This industrial dispute needs to end. Over the last 10 years as a firefighter I have watched energetic enthusiastic colleagues become despondent and negative. We all want to provide an excellent service to our community but have lost our vigour. Morale is at the lowest I have seen it which is affecting our level of service. I will quote the saying 'happy work means a happy home' and vice versa. I for one feel that my family life has been negatively impacted. By ending this industrial dispute, we can get on with the job of providing the excellent service our community deserve.

Thank you and yours sincerely,

LFF Paul Martinucci