

Kirra Vanzetti

From: Brent Towan [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 30 June 2017 11:11 PM
To: LCSC
Subject: INQUIRY INTO THE FIREFIGHTERS' PRESUMPTIVE RIGHTS COMPENSATION AND FIRE SERVICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (REFORM) BILL 2017

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees

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

I am Brent Towan, I am a level 3 firefighter at Ballarat City Fire Station and I work for the Country Fire Authority. I have worked for the organisation for close to 4 years and I am a couple of months away from becoming a fully qualified firefighter.

During my time at the Country Fire Authority I have worked at the Warrnambool Fire Station and lived in Warrnambool. I now work at the Ballarat City Fire Station and live in Torquay.

I have gained the following increments and qualifications since I have been in the job.

- Tanker Increment
- Heavy Pumper Increment
- Medium Pumper Increment
- Breathing Apparatus Van Increment
- Hazardous Materials Van Increment
- Bronto 37m Ladder Platform Increment
- Steep Angle Rope Rescue Operator
- High Angle Rope Rescue Operator

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

As a firefighter there is no guarantee that there will be volunteer support at a structure fire. With this proposed reform there will be a guaranteed two truck dispatch within 8 minutes of a call which will make my role and job safer and this will give the community greater protection. As the population and risks grow, firefighters deserve to have a fire service that grows to meet the demand and expectations of the community.

I value the contributions and sacrifice the CFA volunteers make and have a good working relationship with the volunteers. But as the community grows along with the risks there is an unreasonable amount of workload place on them and their ability to turn out is compromised especially in built up areas with higher call rates. As listed above the increments and qualifications I have worked hard to gain and twice as hard to maintain due to the heavy workload and variety of calls that I respond to.

I have had a number of jobs where I have had no staff or volunteer support which has drastically compromised my safety the safety of the public and the safety of the rest of my team on the fire ground. Firefighting is a dangerous job but we can minimise the risks by integrating the fire services and guaranteeing that there is at least 7 firefighters dispatched. I have been the only BA wearer at several jobs and have had to wear multiple Bas back to back as there was no one else qualified and there was no back up if something was to happen to me. This makes my job very stressful and very unsafe.

As a fire service levy rate payer I find it appalling that there is negative feedback about the fire service reform. This reform will give the community a greater protection, it will give myself greater protection on the job and Victoria will receive the fire service that they pay for.

Below are examples from my experiences which demonstrates the failures of the current structure:

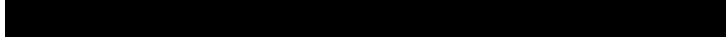
Feel free to contact me directly to discuss examples about the current structure failures.

Yours sincerely,



Brent Towan Firefighter

Ballarat City Fire Station, 1120 Sturt St Ballarat 3350



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