

Kirra Vanzetti

From: Tony and Lynne-Maree Jackson [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 30 June 2017 11:26 PM
To: LCSC
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fire services reform

Importance: High

Dear Committee Members,

Please consider my objection and concerns over the proposed legislation effecting the volunteer firefighters in the Country Fire Authority. The Andrews government are pushing the legislation through without any consultation with the volunteers other than a visit to Integrated stations by the Emergency Services Commissioner and a whirlwind tour through our area by Minister Merlino and Chief Officer Steve Warrington telling us that the detail will all be sorted later. The Minister's opening statement was that CFA had not been modernised since 1957 which was taken as an insult by the volunteers present as both CFA management and it's firefighters, both paid and volunteer, have continually developed as a world class fire and rescue organisation. This meeting confirmed to me that no-one actually knows what the outcome will be until after the change is through parliament.

As I see it, the only reason the government want the change is to satisfy the demands of the proposed EBA for the paid firefighters. I believe that the use of Operations Officers and Operations Managers that are attached to Fire Rescue Victoria and therefore under the same EBA being seconded to CFA does not remedy the problem.

I have real concerns for the current volunteers at integrated stations becoming disenfranchised in the future and resigning because they have no actual response area to service. If this occurs the surge capacity for large scale fires in Victoria and our support to other States will become dangerously low.

Craig Lapsley stated that Fire Rescue Victoria firefighters will receive a higher level of training to the CFA firefighters. I am concerned this will result in deficiencies in CFA's ability to effectively respond to complex incidents within its boundaries. Does this mean that FRV then become the lead agency for anything more than bushfire or structure fire in the CFA area?

I have been told that in future an independent panel will review and decide on any changes to FRV boundaries and if this occurs that the existing brigade will be able to continue to co-exist with the new FRV brigade. Where will the funding for this infrastructure come from as I believe that the \$100m is only for the initial split?

The presumptive legislation was put to us by our local member as being the same conditions for Paid and Volunteer firefighters and yet it appears to be straight forward for one and not so for the other. Why is there any distinction in the legislation between paid and volunteer at all? They fight the same fires and are exposed to the same hazards. Why would you handle employee claims in house and refer volunteers to WorkCover?

Regards,
Anthony William Jackson
Volunteer Firefighter
Huntly Fire Brigade
[REDACTED]

