

Hi my name is Paul Read Leading Firefighter 27876 CFA Geelong City Fire Station. I have been in the CFA for just over 6 years I have been stationed at Melton Fire Station, Ballarat Fire Station, Point Cook Fire Station and now at Geelong City Fire Station.

My Qualifications include:

Road Rescue Operator

37m and 42m Bronto Ladder Platform Operator

High Angle Rope Tech

CBR and Hazmat Operator

BA Van Operator

Pumper and Tanker Operator

In my time in the CFA I have had the opportunity to work at a number of different station across the state, even in the short amount of time that I have been a Firefighter things have started to change the role of the volunteer firefighter is changing. The skill set required is huge the work involved just to keep your skills up to standard are a huge consumer of time. The areas in which I have worked have become much more densely populated and as such the requirement to have a modern fire service is crucial. Just in my area the risk profile is immense we go to 2500 jobs a year , these jobs are many and varied from Road accident rescue to complex structural fires.

I do believe the volunteers have a place in the fire service of Victoria and believe the best idea is for the CFA to once again become a volunteer organisation. FRV will enable the career fire fighters of both the CFA and MFB to come together, share resources better and become a more cohesive unit. We have different radios we have different trucks our stations are different we have an overlap of head offices and training facilities; bring it all together under one banner.

I could tell you events in my career where volunteer response has not been what it should be, but Ill leave that to the statistics, Im not here to beat up on volunteers they do a job for the community and that wont change into the future, the town where I live is serviced by a volunteer brigade and they attend 50 jobs a year and they have been very vocal and negative on this, it disappoints me greatly when I no off at least 4 other career firefighters in my area, they chose to side against us, use this as a political debate instead of asking us to come down and give them a chop out. Use our skill set, but due to all this tension, and an us and them mentality it won't happen. Maybe in the future when they see that nothing will change for them, and we become FRV and they are the CFA it will be different.

Things wont change unless you as a committee makes the decision to support the FRV and the presumptive rights legislation, lets stop all the talk and the scaremongering and get on with it, the time is right for these changes, I deserve to be able to have an EBA, I deserve the right to wear my uniform in my town without feeling like I have done something wrong. I work hard for the community I give up my time when I can to support it. I ask for you now to support me and all Career Staff, and in doing so I think you will find that this will benefit volunteers and all Victorians.

Thanks for your time I would be Happy to answer any questions that you may have in the future.

Paul Read

Leading Fire Fighter 27876

CFA Geelong City

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