

[REDACTED]

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

Dear Inquiry Committee,

My name is [REDACTED] I hold the rank of Station Officer and have 30yrs experience with the MFB.

- During my career, I have been based predominately in western district and have been stationed at all western district stations.
- I am writing this submission in support of the proposed fire services reform for the following reasons:

Due to rostering requirements, periodically I am required to be rostered to MFB boundary stations that border the CFA area. Stations such as Laverton, North Laverton and Deer Park. These MFB stations also respond to calls with CFA appliances from Point Cook, Hoppers Crossing, Werribee, Truganina and Caroline Springs.

When I am working at these MFB stations and responding into CFA area, I am shocked by the amount of growth in population, housing and industry that is accruing in these areas. These areas are still zoned as country Victoria under the current antiquated fire service boundaries.

These areas are now heavily urbanised growth corridors with sprawling suburbs which continue to grow. The CFA volunteer brigades that respond into these areas do a great job but they cannot be available 24/7 365, because they have jobs and families and due to the volume of emergency calls increasing there is a need for a full time professional response into these areas.

There are 35 highly urbanised areas that are still wrongly zoned as Country Victoria. Under the current antiquated fire boundaries, these areas require a rapid urban response.

In the MFD, when I respond to a fire call I know that at least one other primary appliance has been dispatched, and as I approach a fire I know there will be at least 2 primary appliances on scene with a minimum of 7 fire fighters. However, this is not always the case when I respond into the bordering areas.

The ongoing dispute where firefighters have been made a political football has taken a toll mentally not only on myself, but also my colleagues. We simply wish to go to work and serve the community, which has been difficult due to firefighters being demonised by certain media outlets, members of parliament and volunteer association.

Being a fire fighter is a dangerous profession and despite taking all available precautions, there is a higher instance of some illnesses among fire fighters than the general community. Presumptive rights compensation legislation and Fire service legislation amendment if implemented would help mitigate dangers faced by firefighters and better protect the Victorian community. I request that the committee maintain my confidentiality.

Yours sincerely,

Station Officer [REDACTED]
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