

Kirra Vanzetti

From: Chris Owens [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 1 July 2017 3:52 PM
To: LCSC
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: FIRE SERVICES REFORM SUBMISSION

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees

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

I am a Leading Fire fighter with the CFA, I have been a staff member for almost 8 years. I am a qualified rescue operator, Pumper and Tanker operator also.

I live in Geelong and work at the Belmont Fire Station. I also volunteer in my community with the local football and basketball clubs where I work with juniors and have also done some volunteer work with disadvantaged youth in my local area.

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

- I believe that the community needs and deserves the best possible fire protection that this state can provide. Currently there are two sets of standards that are impacting the community that pay the same fire service levy as each other. Meaning, if you live in 2 neighbouring suburbs you pay the same fire service levy as each other.

The major difference is whether your house is within the assignment area of a volunteer brigade or an integrated brigade (staff). The volunteer brigade may not be able to respond from when the pager goes off for 6,8,10 minutes or even longer. Whereas an integrated station with staff must respond within 90 seconds of a pager notification.
- My health and safety and the health and safety of my fellow fire fighters is obviously of paramount importance. This has been compromised on a few occasions. For example, one evening my shift, operating 3 up were responded to a structure fire in Torquay. It took us approx.. 14 mins to get on scene and in that time the volunteers on scene had not commenced an internal attack on the fire. The Leading Fire Fighter and myself immediately started an internal attack and successfully knocked down the fire and prevented it from spreading even further. The house was severely damaged by the fire and the structural integrity of the remainder of the house was compromised.

The major concern for me was that there was no-one on scene capable of wearing Breathing Apparatus and rescuing myself or my fellow Leading if we were to get into trouble inside this structure. It often crosses my mind that my health and safety is sometimes under threat due to the current structure that the Country Fire Authority operate under. This cannot continue. Fire service reform means that these concerns can be alleviated.

On a personal note, I am sick to death of the continual misinformation being peddled out by the Herald Sun, the VFBV and the Liberal Party. Refer to the propaganda below put together by this local federal member recently, absolute lies. Where's the accountability for her misrepresenting the volunteers and creating division.

Stick/Staple Here

Delivery Address:
 PO Box 20
 BELMONT VIC 3216



Sarah Henderson MP
 Federal Member for Corangamite
 Reply Paid 88903
 BELMONT VIC 3216

Dear Resident

Labor’s attack on CFA volunteers is relentless.

Last year, the Turnbull Government amended the Fair Work Act to prevent Labor’s hostile takeover of the Country Fire Authority.

Now, backed by Bill Shorten and Federal Labor, Daniel Andrews and the militant United Firefighters Union are at it again.

In establishing Fire Services Victoria, Labor is abolishing CFA integrated stations including in Belmont and Ocean Grove. This is designed to force CFA volunteers out and tear apart regional CFA brigades.

This is further evidence that Labor is determined to destroy the CFA, protect union mates and put Victorian families at risk.

Now, more than ever, our wonderful CFA volunteers need your support.

Please help the Liberals fight for Corangamite’s CFA volunteers by filling in and returning this survey. Your voice matters.

Sarah Henderson

Sarah Henderson MP
 Federal Member for Corangamite

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JACK R
 Senior Counsel. R

Never before have I walked down the street in uniform and had a member of the public call me a profanity in front of my children. All because they’ve read a report in the paper or received a flyer in the mail that is absolute concocted rubbish.

Professional fire fighters have been demonised in the public, which has resulted in a lack of public confidence, all unnecessarily. Now when I leave work and head home I change my jumper so as to avoid further vilification. I attribute this squarely to the Herald Sun, the VFBV and the Liberal / National Party. I used to be proud of being a CFA staff member and had no issues to wear my uniform in public, now I’m not so sure. Morale has been affected greatly in the last few years and the only people I can rely on and trust are my fellow work mates.

- A new organisation – Fire Rescue Victoria – will bring together MFB and CFA career fire fighters to serve metropolitan Melbourne and major regional centres. Victoria’s 1,220 CFA volunteer brigades will be strengthened and supported to serve and protect their communities as they always have. These changes will be beneficial to all.

Yours Sincerely,

Christian Owens





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