

Kirra Vanzetti

From: Mitch Meade [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 1 July 2017 8:59 PM
To: LCSC
Subject: Fire services reform submission

I am a career fire-fighter with the CFA, I live in Melbourne and work in South Morang, this submission is in support of the proposed reform of the fire services.

While I have experienced many situations in my position as a career fire fighter where my safety has been jeopardized because of current out dated fire policy, I thought I would use this submission to highlight an everyday of the week occurrence, which with our current fire services model is the norm. It is important to note that Emergency service management needs to cater for worst case scenarios rather than the assumption that incidents will be relatively benign, which is where the proposed reform of the fire services really stands above the current status quo.

On the 29th of June 2017 we responded to a nearby brigade area of Doreen (14 minute drive under normal conditions) where despite the distance we were first appliance on scene, Doreen was second appliance on scene however the only personnel was the driver. While as career fire fighters we assist and work in conjunction with volunteers regularly, no amount of training and good will can make a person with a full time job available at a moment's notice during a work day. Like many urban fringes this problem is exasperated by the ever increasing amount of population which has an extended commute to work.

My officer in charge is then faced with the situation that 15minutes after receiving a code 1 call (the highest priority) he still has no back up. Next nearest station; Mernda-7 mins drive + the time it takes for 3 volunteers to reach the station, get changed & turnout.

So if we use this benign everyday example of a job we get every day as career fire-fighters, but instead something catastrophic happened on scene at Doreen; best case scenario would have been a crew from Mernda coming to our aid 25minutes later! If we then consider that Mernda is also a volunteer brigade and has the same issues as Doreen getting a crew during working hours, our only guaranteed solution is to get another staffed station to respond.

The next closest staffed station is Epping (20 mins drive) under our current system they would have responded after Doreen & Mernda failed to get an adequate crew, so our only guaranteed support arrives 30 minutes after we arrive on scene & 45 minutes after the initial incident!

The changes proposed guarantee backup, with at least 7 fire fighters on the ground which means for this everyday scenario we have certainty that we will be supported in 6 minutes, instead of the current antiquated system which produces an uncertain 30 minute wait.

I ask that you consider my following points:

- Give the community reliable service, guaranteed service to a set standard.
- Look into the future of Victoria and deliver a service that can evolve with the growth and increased risk.
- Look at trends of volunteer service and pressures associated with increased call rates.

- Consider factual response time/rates to establish where volunteer systems require improvements.
- Consider my work, my contribution I make every day and support my need for a EBA and give me confidence in my management for the future 30 years I intend to work and support my communities.
- Take away the emotional connections and work on securing a world class fire service for Victoria.
- Increase in specialised response capabilities, including infrastructure, plant and equipment and training.

Yours sincerely,

Mitchell Jack Meade, [REDACTED]



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