

Kirra Vanzetti

From: Inquiry into the Firefighters' Presumptive Rights Compensation and Fire Services Legislation Amendment (Reform) Bill 2017 [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 1 July 2017 9:10 PM
To: LCSC
Subject: New Submission to Inquiry into the Firefighters' Presumptive Rights Compensation and Fire Services Legislation Amendment (Reform) Bill 2017

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into the Firefighters' Presumptive Rights Compensation and Fire Services Legislation Amendment (Reform) Bill 2017

Mr Richard Stanger
[REDACTED]

Leading Firefighter
[REDACTED]

SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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My name is Richard Stanger and I have been a professional MFB firefighter for six years years. I am currently based at Glen Waverley fire station. I write to express my support for the proposed fire services reform.

I live at [REDACTED] Croydon North. I consider this to be an urban area of average density. My address falls within the Wonga Park fire brigade response zone. Wonga Park is a fully volunteer station. Despite paying a higher fire levy than residents who live 200 metres from me who fall within the Metropolitan Fire District (MFB response area), I receive an inferior response in the event that I call for help from fire services. This is due to the fact that Wonga Park cannot guarantee any sort of response in the event that I should call for help.

Volunteers do an excellent job however they cannot provide the guaranteed response that paid firefighters can. I have witnessed this first hand when my neighbours called 000 due to a fire at their house. On this occasion, Wonga Park failed to attend and they relied on an appliance from Croydon to respond and extinguish the fire. Thankfully on this occasion no major loss of property or life occurred, however, had it been a more serious fire I dread to think what the outcome would have been given that there would have been only one truck initially attending. Best and safest practice requires at least two trucks to attend any sort of fire.

Volunteers do a fantastic job, particularly in wildfire situations over summer and in supporting paid firefighters. In urban areas like mine however, their response is inadequate. As a firefighter with the MFB I frequently attend calls with CFA volunteers. One issue we have encountered is that even when they do respond, volunteer crews are often not trained to wear breathing apparatus and are therefore unable to enter burning buildings. This means they are limited to external fire fighting tasks and unable to assist if any rescue of a person is required.

Victoria's fire services boundaries have not changed significantly in 60 years. Under this outdated system, 35 areas are wrongly zoned as 'country', despite being heavily urbanised and residential. Frankston, Cranbourne, Dandenong, Craigieburn, Melton, Springvale, Boronia and Geelong are just some of the 35 'country areas'.

These areas need to be modernised as they are highly urbanised areas as part of the reform of the fire service. A rapid 8 minute response, with 7 professional career firefighters on two fire trucks is the minimum standard needed in highly urbanised areas.

All Victorian, professional and volunteer firefighters, deserve modern fire services that meet the needs of our growing communities. To ensure the safety of all Victorians - including me as a firefighter, I ask you to please seriously consider your support for the proposed fire services reform. Reform of our fire services will ensure the safety of your constituents, and all communities in our growing state. Additionally, it will ensure the safety of our firefighters and stop the ever increasing and unrealistic demand being placed on volunteer firefighters because of the enormous urban growth resulting in increased emergency calls. I also respectfully submit that you give consideration to my request to modernise the fire service This needs to be endorsed and implemented by Parliament before the commencement of the fire season. This is important to me and my colleagues

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File1:

File2:

File3: