

Hello

My name is Cameron Thill.

I am employed by CFA as a level 2 Fire fighter at Corio Fire Station, where the minimum number of people per shift is currently 7- This allows 3 on the Pumper, 2 on the Heavy HAZMAT and 2 on the Teleboom. I have been at Corio since completing a comprehensive 19 week recruit course in late 2015. On top of the standard Pumper and Tanker endorsements, through extensive training and study I am now a qualified HAZMAT and CBR technician, as well as a Teleboom operator. These specialist appliances are placed strategically at Corio due to the large and diverse primary response area. Within this area lie major hazard facilities such as Viva refinery, Elgas plant, and Terminals.

I am writing this submission to you in strong support of the proposed reform of the fire services.

Community safety and protection will benefit greatly from having a modernised fire service. This would guarantee a response of Two fire trucks with at least 7 Fire fighters be dispatched within 8 minutes. Unfortunately under the current model in some areas, this is not the case and the safety of Fire fighters is compromised.

The 35 areas in question (CFA integrated stations) are now highly urbanised, with expanding residential and industrial risks. With constant movement of the urban interface, the workload of volunteers is becoming greater. In some areas volunteers are having delayed or no response – Take Lara as an example, 71% of the time they failed to meet service delivery standards. As a Fire fighter, if we were to attend a Structure Fire in Lara, I feel my safety is compromised as there is no guarantee that there is help on the way. If the proposed reforms were implemented, we would see the CFA revert back to volunteer only, and Career CFA and MFB fire fighters come together as one, creating a defined, reliable and sustainable fire service which Victorians deserve. Furthermore, The effect this would have on Volunteers is Nil, in fact Volunteers would benefit from additional funding and continued support.

All Fire fighters be it Volunteer or Career, Share the same interest in protecting the community. Reform of the fire services would further enhance public safety and fire fighter safety, creating a great foundation to be able to adapt to a continually growing state.