

Fedele De Leo



[REDACTED]

Date: 4th July 2017

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees

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

I am Fedele De Leo, a Station Officer with CFA and currently on secondment to the MFB.

I have been employed by CFA for 15 years and fulfilled various operational roles at many of CFA's integrated stations. I am currently stationed at Eastern Hill Fire Station No.1 in Melbourne's CBD as part of the MFB/CFA Secondment Program.

Having now had the opportunity to work in both fire services, I am confident a re-structured Fire Rescue Victoria model is by far the most important and necessary reform for the State of Victoria.

FRV will address the current anomaly of an inconsistent fire protection service that has plagued many CFA integrated locations. At these locations, a professional/volunteer response model is still utilized despite 60 years of urban and population growth.

This model is now dangerously outdated in many heavily urbanized suburbs and towns in Victoria.

As a Station Officer, and Incident Controller within these CFA response areas, I have been directly impacted by a system that expects volunteers to meet standards of fire and rescue cover consistent with best practice.

This expectation is unrealistic in 2017 and beyond.

I have attended numerous fire and rescue events in CFA areas where I have been confronted with how the current system and continued reliance on a volunteer response fails to meet a consistent standard.

This includes but not limited to operational skill set deficiencies, delayed response, inadequately equipped, inexperienced and firefighters in extremely poor physical condition.

Within an urban context, established townships and/or semi-rural interface, this is simply not good enough.



Conversely, Victoria's vast rural districts lend themselves to a continued volunteer response model. Within this context, the reliance on volunteers is essential.

I worked co-operatively and collaboratively with volunteers in each of the areas highlighted previously for the majority of my career and am reassured that the proposed FRV amendment will ensure that continues.

I therefore wish to express to the Select Committee that I am in favor of:

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

Yours sincerely

Fedele De Leo