

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees,

I respectfully request this submission to be kept confidential.

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

I am a Structural Firefighting Instructor with CFA.

I spent 5 years prior to that as a Leading Aviation Firefighter at Melbourne International Airport. I have been a CFA Volunteer for 26 years holding qualifications (including specialist) as a Sector Commander, Strike Team Leader, Road Accident Rescue, HAZMAT, AIIMS (Safety Officer) and Urban/Wildfire Crew leader.

My commendations and awards include the CFA Chairman's Scholarship, the inaugural VFBV leadership scholarship (Frontline Management) and recruit of the year (Ballarat Fire Brigade). I hold a Bachelor's Degree in Asian Studies/Political Science, Certificates II, III and IV in Public Safety and Certificates IV in Workplace Training and Assessment and Frontline Management. I am also a recipient of The National Medal and National Emergency Medal.

I volunteer in my community – CFA Volunteer (26 years) – Wando Heights Rural Fire Brigade, Nelson Rural Fire Brigade, Ballarat Urban Fire Brigade, Ballan Urban Fire Brigade. I am also a member of Ballan RSL (non-voting).

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

As an ex-career aviation firefighter I understand how vital a fast despatch is. I also appreciate the importance of having a fully qualified back up crew arriving within minutes to provide proper and safe support. Modern houses now burn faster and hotter than ever and its imperative firefighters get to work as quickly as possible. I believe the community is better provided for (with the chances of survivability increased) by having two fully crewed trucks dispatched and on scene within minutes of each other.

I don't believe having career firefighters under the one service will affect or diminish volunteer capacity or endanger protection of their communities. Non-integrated brigades (rural and urban) will still respond in the same manner and will continue to do the great work they always have.

The time has come to modernise our Fire Service.

Yours sincerely,

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