

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees,

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

1. I am Leading Fire-fighter Leonard Williams and have worked for the MFB for 31 years.
2. I live in Ivanhoe and work in Bundoora.
3. I am writing this submission in support of the proposed reform of the fire services for the following reasons:
 - As a fire-fighter it is imperative to ensure that the people sent to a call are qualified to complete the required tasks so that all fire-fighters can work in a safe environment.
 - Response times are crucial for Community safety and containing fires to their room of origin
 - Larger Communities on the urban fringe deserve a professionally staffed fire station to cater for increased callouts due to higher density residential areas.
 - The reform areas are around the 35 integrated stations primary response areas – there will be no effect on other volunteer brigades or bushfire response
 - This reform will assist with standardisation of career training/specialist response/response standards and equipment
 - Having all career fire-fighting staff under the one banner will improve moral with professional staff and standardised the service the community's receive
 - The current environment has damaged fire-fighter moral at station level and has had a negative impact on many families
 - The reform will benefit volunteers as it has included a package to assist with volunteer recruitment and retention across the CFA; and includes funding for volunteer station upgrades.

4. Below are examples from my experiences which demonstrate the failures of the current structure:

I have attended many structure fires and incidents on the boundary with the CFA volunteers and have found working with them is fantastic. However there have been numerous times where they have been called on to assist and have not arrived until operations have ceased. This made the job stressful and unsafe as the required amount of fire-fighters on the fire ground was not achieved.

Yours sincerely,

Leonard Williams

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