

Dear Committee Members,

I have served 23 years full time in emergency services, with most of this time being in the Fire Service.

I implore you to support the longstanding notion of a combined fire service. Many inquiries have been made into the current organisations, boundaries and cultures of the fire services – all with one conclusion – REFORM.

The only way to move forward, both politically and logically is to pass this unifying legislation.

The emotional toll of being treated as a political football has been almost too much for me. I am just getting through with the support of family and colleagues. To go to my polling booth here in Geelong last election and be faced with paraphernalia stating I am a thug – a militant unionist – a person that has interests other than my community at heart is DEVASTATING.

24 years of dedication to my job, community and fellow man - often to the detriment of my health is not deserving of this.

I can tolerate the constant pain I endure due to work sustained injuries (broken neck, bulged discs, worn knees etc). These I can overcome – but to be treated like a thug or a bully is beyond the pale. My mental health is suffering.

FIRST step to reform is to combine the professional firefighters. THEN we can ALL move forward without political interference and make our organisations great again.

It starts at the top. Our Managers need to become leaders and move the Fire Services forward.

Yours sincerely,

Lorne Tiernan
Leading Firefighter 10197 MFB