

Kirra Vanzetti

From: Brendan O'Neill [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 3 July 2017 5:50 PM
To: LCSC
Subject: FW: INQUIRY INTO THE FIREFIGHTERS' PRESUMTATIVE RIGHTS COMPENSATION AND FIRE SERVICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT(REFORM) BILL 2017

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees,

My name is Brendan O'Neill and I am a career firefighter employed by the CFA. I am a Level 3 firefighter stationed at Geelong City and I live in Torquay. I started working for the CFA in 2014 and since being stationed at Geelong I have successfully gained accreditations in the following- Pumper appliance, Tanker appliance, Road rescue appliance, steep and high angle rope rescue and Ladder platform appliance. I support the fire services reform and my main reasons are as follows-

The reason I am writing this submission is that in my relatively short time working for the CFA I have seen safety issues that could and have affected the community I serve and that I live in.

The area I live in has volunteers protecting the community. As it stands now if my house is on fire and my wife and kids are stuck inside they essentially have to wait for volunteers to arrive at the station, wait for a sufficient crew with a driver, an incident controller and 2 BA operators and then make their way to the house. If they don't have a sufficient crew, they will not turn a truck out and my wife and beautiful little kids will still be trapped waiting for a crew to arrive. If FRV goes ahead and our EBA is signed off it will ensure that 7 staff firefighters from Geelong City and Belmont will be dispatched to a fire like this and we will be out the door in 90 seconds once we have been paged. For me, this means that my family is getting the best protection it can. I am definitely not in any means having a direct attack at my local brigade as they do great work in the community. But if the volunteers are busy, have a function, are at work or just can't get enough numbers out the door my family is at great risk and I want to see the best fire protection not only for my family but for every family in Victoria.

For volunteer areas that will be getting support from staff into their area is great. However if the volunteers do turn out and get to an incident before us, they have to make the decision whether we are required or not. If we are still required in the incidents I have been to in volunteer areas, all we have ever done is speak directly to the volunteer running the job and we always ask- How can we help, what do you want us to do. They will continue to do this and we will continue to be there to help with whatever needs doing or turn around if they decide we are not required.

Further to this and again I am not attacking volunteers but I have seen time and time again stations not able to turn out to fires, car accidents, gas leaks, alarms ect. An example of this is today as I am writing this email we were paged to a car accident with people trapped on Cape Otway road. Our rescue appliance responded within 90 seconds and was waiting for local brigade to turn out, get to the incident and put in a situation report so we knew what was happening there and start putting a plan together. The local brigade failed to respond and the next closest brigade was paged. They managed to get a truck out the door and got on scene but in that time that there was no firefighters on scene, this could have potentially been a matter of life and death. I know that people in these communities need better protection and are mad if they think they don't!

I hope you have the time to sit down and reflect on what I have written and feel to contact me if you require more info or want any more help.

Thanks,

Brendan



Brendan O'Neill Firefighter

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[REDACTED]



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