

Raymond John Spriggs AFSM**Senior Leading Firefighter- Stn No. 25 Oakleigh****42 years experience as a Career Firefighter with the MFB****Introduction**

I fully support reform to our fire services as it will provide our highly urbanised city of Melbourne and its firefighters with a standardised fire service.

Training

As a career firefighter, both CFA and MFB constantly receive standardised training throughout our service time putting our skills into practice. Volunteer brigades have limited training and there is no accountability to maintain their skills.

Community Expectation

What does the community expect from a fire service? I have spoken to many friends and family in Bordering CFA areas and they are disappointed that their community has a substandard fire service and higher Insurance premiums, considering that neighbouring suburbs have a professional fire service with all the additional benefits that it provides.

Volunteer Limitations**Emergency Response**

With a professional fire service we turn out to every logged call. With a volunteer service crews can pick and choose what calls they want to attend. When volunteer based stations do respond, in what capacity are they responding? Is it a fire truck with 4 crew members or is it one person in their own car with a severely limited firefighting capacity?

Are they Breathing Apparatus trained? Having this capacity allows a firefighter to perform a rescue inside a smoke filled premises. It is unfair for volunteers to be put in a position where they arrive first on scene to a house fire with an individual trapped inside and they are unable to perform a rescue without putting themselves in danger.

As a professional firefighter living in an urbanised MFB zoned area I currently feel privileged at what fire protection I receive, but disappointed at what limited fire protection is afforded those in urban CFA areas.

Protracted Incidents

Should we really expect volunteers to spend days or weeks away from their families and livelihoods to attend a protracted incident? E.g. Hazelwood mine fire.

EMR Capability

Volunteer brigades provide emergency medical response in a limited capacity. Firefighters are now responding to many incidents that require medical assistance. E.g. Bourke St. attack.

Is it acceptable for the community to have volunteers responding to medical incidents given their **increased response times**? Appliances need to be on the road in 90 seconds to give the patient the best chance of survival.

Benefits of Fire Services Reform

- Single standardised fire service
 - Training
 - Equipment
 - Vehicles
 - Procedures
 - Crewing
- Decreased response times
 - 7 minute response times
- Reduction in property damage
- Increased chances for human survival
- EMR capacity for greater Melbourne
- Increased firefighter safety
 - Minimum manning (crewing)
- Reduced overheads
 - Administration
 - Consolidated staffing

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