

Kirra Vanzetti

From: Inquiry into the Firefighters' Presumptive Rights Compensation and Fire Services Legislation Amendment (Reform) Bill 2017 [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 4 July 2017 8:44 PM
To: LCSC
Subject: New Submission to Inquiry into the Firefighters' Presumptive Rights Compensation and Fire Services Legislation Amendment (Reform) Bill 2017

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into the Firefighters' Presumptive Rights Compensation and Fire Services Legislation Amendment (Reform) Bill 2017

Station Officer Andrew Luedecke
[REDACTED]
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SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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Dear Fire Services Bill Select Committee members

I make this submission to this committee as a member of the Victorian public and also in light of my role in the fire services. I hold an operational position as a Station Officer with 15 years service with the MFB, most recently located at the Burnley Complex, Technical Operations - Marine Department. The majority of my service with the MFB has been in Central, Western and Northern metropolitan districts. Prior to my service with the MFB I worked for DWELP in the South-West region as a ranger and as a firefighter.

I support fire services reform and presumptive rights compensation.

I have always experienced a Victorian firefighting landscape that has volunteer and career staff working side-by-side, complementing each other. This relationship has unfortunately been compromised to a minor extent in recent times, with attributing media coverage having a significant impact on morale and well-being within volunteer and career ranks.

I see fire services reform as a timely panacea to recent events. MFB and CFA career staff have performed the same role for some time on each side of urban boundaries and with some structural and procedural incompatibility that a merger would dispel. Importantly I also see this as an opportunity for the public to have a clearer understanding of a single career fire service, rather than MFB or CFA depending on which side of a boundary you live on. It would also offer a clearer understanding of the CFA as a volunteer firefighting agency, with a key focus on supporting its volunteers and ensuring volunteer autonomy over their organisation, and a service delivery model that focuses on effective interoperability between volunteer and career agencies, and the best fire response for every community.

Volunteer brigades and their members are an incredible asset to the State and any career firefighter responding in a volunteer area should value the local knowledge and experience that these community based responders possess. I see no reason why this reform would lessen the role of volunteers, as it states that no volunteer brigades will be disbanded. Any expansion of career stations in growing urban areas would

further compliment volunteer response, and most importantly provide a fire response suitable to the risks and population profile of the area.

The best examples of the current career/volunteer integrated stations on the urban fringe highlight this.

I believe this reform will not impact fire service delivery across the state. It is really a status quo, but with the prospect of expanded volunteer complimented career response. It is also an opportunity to remove the cost associated with duplication of career service management and administrative hierarchy and systems across MFB/CFA.

I believe volunteer engagement and participation will be enhanced by empowering volunteers with a singular CFA identity and a bill that ensures no displacement of volunteers and more funding and support to volunteer brigades.

I also believe that presumptive rights compensation is incredibly important. Victoria lags behind other states in this respect and this protection for all victorian firefighters, both career and volunteer is imperative.

Thankyou for considering my submission.

Respectfully.

Andrew Luedecke

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File1:

File2:

File3: