

Kirra Vanzetti

From: Tom Kamsteeg [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 4 July 2017 11:30 PM
To: LCSC
Subject: Fire Services Reform

Dear Assistant Clerk Committies,

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

My name is Tom Kamsteeg and I have been a professional firefighter with the CFA for the past 3 years. I currently live in Aspendale and work out of Frankston Fire Station.

I write to you to express my support for the proposed fire services reform.

During my time working in Frankston I have seen first hand the complex issues which the organisation must deal with on a daily basis. The issues of urban growth and the expectation for volunteers to respond to an increasing number of call outs is becoming an ongoing concern. Volunteers do a great job and should be commended for their time and effort. However they cannot be expected to meet the increasing demand in call outs as our population and infrastructure continues to grow.

12 months ago I experienced a situation which made me aware of how not having a guaranteed response by a local fire station can put the communitys safety as well as my own at risk.

One of Frankstons appliances (teleboom) was responded as a support call to a house fire in Carrum Downs. I was travelling with a Leading firefighter and a fellow firefighter. I was in the back seat with minimal experience (2yrs) compared to my 2 colleagues. As we approached it was evident due to the thick, black smoke column that the house was well alight .I still had not heard any radio traffic from Carrum Downs Fire Station so knew that it would be just us for some time. Upon arrival we all undertook the tasks we have been trained to do. Leading Fogden was incident controller so he began doing his size up, Firefighter Mc Carthy was driving so his priority was to get water into the pump to ensure continuous water supply. My job was to don Breathing Apparatus and get a hose line to the front door to begin an internal fire attack. My number one priority was to make entry and to do an internal search for anyone that had not been able to escape. Thankfully no casualties were found as the house was unoccupied at the time. The Chief Officers Standing Order states that an internal attack for a structure fire can only commence with a minimum of 2 operators wearing breathing apparatus for safety purposes. On this day I was the only BA operator which goes against the CFAs minimum safety requirements. I did have a choice this day. I could have waited indefinitely for another crew to arrive. However this option is not given consideration under such circumstances.

I support the proposed Fire Services Reform as it would prevent this situation and ones similar to it from occurring in the future. The reform will improve the communities safety as well as my own.

Yours Sincerely,

Thomas Kamsteeg
 [REDACTED]



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