

Kirra Vanzetti

From: SCULLEY, Jon [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 5 July 2017 7:38 AM
To: LCSC
Subject: Submission Fire Services Reform Bill. Jon Sculley

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees

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

My name is Jon Sculley, I have served as a professional firefighter with the Melbourne Metropolitan Fire Brigade for over 36 years. I am currently ranked as a Leading Firefighter, working in Community Development and Risk Management at the Burnley Training Complex in Richmond. Over the years I have served at Eastern Hill, Headquarters and Carlton Fire Station, specialising in Heavy Salvage, Road Rescue and Ladder Platform Operations. At the other end of the scale I have also spent considerable time in the Northern Zone, inner suburban, Preston and Northcote and into the outer reaches of the MFB District at Somerton, responding with professional and volunteer CFA fire-fighter's.

It was during my time at Somerton that I received a Commanders Commendation for service at the Somerton Park Caravan Park Fire, where tragically lives were lost. Over the years I have responded on strike teams, these include, to Moyston in The Grampians and to Geelong to assist with fires along the Great Ocean Road. In February of 2007 I was involved with the fires of Black Saturday, receiving the National Emergency Medal, Bushfires. I was born in Northcote, having spent the majority of my life, living in this suburb.

I am writing this submission in support of the proposed reform of Victoria's fire services because I believe it is necessary for the improved future protection of all Victorians. My work at Risk Management has shown me statistical evidence that Melbourne is growing, population, density and sprawl. The fire services that exist and protect our State have evolved into what they have become today. Moving into the future this system is out-dated and does not provide for the protection of life and property in the Built Environment as well as it possibly could. Regional Centres are also growing, Geelong, Bendigo, Ballarat and Shepparton. The need for a service that is professional in all of these areas, and others, will provide greater protection for its residents and their property. Reform is well overdue, and the changes that we make today should be made with the future in mind. The reform will provide the standardisation of career training, specialist response and equipment. Best practice should be the aim .

Fire-fighters themselves require and deserve a safe working environment. The reforms will also provide a safer workplace for the professional and volunteer people that serve our State. The very good work that our volunteers provide must never be underrated. It is important that through these reforms that they too realise a safer, better equipped fire service. That their position is not undermined, their ability to turnout and cover their regions is enhanced and the purpose of volunteers must be continued. It is relevant to note that the reform areas around the 35 integrated stations primary response areas, and that they will have no effect on volunteer brigades or bushfire response and that some of these areas through the growth of Victoria , now are highly urbanised and residential. The culture that exists between professional and volunteers must be healed, although the negative attitudes that are reported are not embraced by all, there is a level of understanding and respect that exists by those that don't tumble into meddling and misleading media reports.

The growth of the Built Environment also brings a growth in risk. Our fire services must grow and adapt to overcome the changes that are happening today and will happen into the future. This reform, that has been brought about by politics, has created an opportunity that may be realised. I have heard speculation from my first day of joining the

Brigade in 1981, that reform may happen. It is something I believe is necessary for the positive evolution of both the professional and volunteer services. It will deliver a safer and more resilient service that performs its role well into the future, for its fire-fighter's, for its communities and for the State of Victoria.

Yours sincerely

Jon Sculley

Leading Firefighter



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