

Kirra Vanzetti

From: Frank [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 5 July 2017 11:45 AM
To: LCSC

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees

Frank Velo

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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

My name is Frank Velo. I am a Senior Leading Firefighter with the MFB and have been a full-time firefighter for 37 years. I am currently stationed at Richmond on C Platoon and have worked at this station for 23 years. Prior to this, I have largely worked at the Central stations of Eastern Hill, North Fitzroy and Carlton.

I am in full support of the proposed fire services reforms.

At present, I live in outer Melbourne and living in an outer suburban area with my family I do not feel safe with the fire brigade response currently offered in these areas.

I have lived in outer Melbourne all my life and have seen the population growth and urbanisation of the greater metropolitan and regional areas throughout my adult years.

I find it unbelievable that despite all this growth, the fire service boundaries have not significantly changed in almost double that time. That means that those people living in urbanised areas in high growth outer suburbs and regional cities don't get the same coverage that is provided in the inner to middle Melbourne suburbs. I believe that the communities in areas such as Doreen, South Morang, Plenty, Epping and Whittlesea deserve (and pay for) a full-time fire service, with two appliances with a minimum seven firefighters responding within 8 minutes. I have seen first-hand the enormous difference a few minutes can have in emergency situations such as the development of a structural fire or the progression of a cardiac arrest.

Due to population growth over the past few decades. These areas must have better responses and with the proposed fire service reforms they will come into line with the current MFB response. Professionally, if I was a firefighter in a current CFA integrated station, I would want to know that I had a fully trained crew on a second appliance arriving within minutes of my appliance for any fire, rescue or incident. At present, there is no such guarantee.

CFA volunteers play a very important part in our rural fire fighting capacity. Each time I am turned out as part of a strike team to rural areas for major bushfires I have and am willing and happy to support them and work with them. These reforms have no impact on the volunteer service (in fact they include features to assist with recruitment, retention and funding) and all to do with better protecting Victoria.

Please do not make the some mistakes that Council's, Local government and the State Government's have made in the pass and not in put into place the necessary infrastructure so these communities can grow safely.

Finally, I want to convey to the Committee the emotional toll this ongoing dispute has had on both my colleagues and me. What began as an EBA negotiation has turned into a public, politically-driven agenda with little regard for the major issue at hand – public safety. When making your recommendations and vote, please make this your deciding factor.

Yours Sincerely

Frank Vela

MFB Reg.#3451