

Kirra Vanzetti

From: Keith Bailey [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 5 July 2017 3:08 PM
To: LCSC
Subject: Fire services reform

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees,

I am a career fire fighter, and live and work in Mildura, in the sunny north west.

I am writing to you to show my support for the proposed fire services reform.
My reasons for this are several.

Firstly, I don't think there should be any further debate about presumptive legislation for fire fighters. If a person is willing to risk their own health and life in the service of the community, whether paid or volunteer, this is the least the state should offer.

Secondly, the separation of volunteers and career staff is long overdue. In my short time in the job, I have been completely blown away by the amount that politics has overtaken an organization, to the point that some people involved can't seem to see that the casualty should be our overriding concern. I'm not sure there is any coming back from this point. While staff and volunteers from my experience are always pleasant to each other, there is a lot of distrust.

If we could each have our own space, I feel we could move forward and strengthen our service to the community. Both groups of people, are extremely community minded, and in my view just need some security in their respective roles, to move forward. With boundaries, we could work together.

In addition to this, I feel that 7 suitably qualified fire fighters on the fire ground, at a structure fire, should be the mandatory minimum. Having made several internal attacks in my short career, I know that it would be a far more unsafe environment was I not able to work in pairs, not know I had an experienced pump operator on the other end of the hose, and not have a second truck on scene should water not be available in the area. These are all realities in some of our volunteer supported outlying areas. 3 people, and a truck, plus perhaps some volunteers, doesn't cut it!

I also should mention, that I grew up in Melbourne, Yarrambat to be exact. The growth experienced in just this part of Melbourne in the last 10 years has been phenomenal, not to mention 50 years. To think that these residents are paying the same levy, as their neighbours in Greensborough, yet receive at best a patchy volunteer response, is shocking. I really do think the community at large doesn't understand the difference in service, and if they were aware of the statistics regarding response times etc., would be appalled. Please don't let a large scale emergency, with mass casualties happen, before we put in place the infrastructure to cope.

Kind regards

Keith Bailey Firefighter
Mildura Fire Station 326 San Mateo Avenue, Mildura, Vic 3500
[REDACTED]

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2017

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