

Dear Assistant clerk committees,

Inquiry into firefighters' presumptive rights compensation and fire legislation amendment (reform) bill 2017.

My name is Myles Hennessey. I am a Senior Station Officer with the Melbourne Metropolitan Fire Brigade. I have been a Firefighter for 30 years 23 years as an officer in charge of a station. Most of my career has been spent working on the MFB CFA boundary in the Western and Northern Suburbs. In 2012, I spent 12 months on secondment to the CFA working at Sunbury as a station officer. I currently hold a diploma of public safety.

I live in Riddell's Creek and work in Brunswick.

I am writing this submission in support of the proposed reform of the fire services for the following reasons.

- Timely response to calls.
- Guaranteed trained and qualified firefighters responding to calls with career staff minimum 7 firefighters on the fire ground. Unknown response from volunteers. Training levels differ number of volunteers that respond cannot be guaranteed
- All Victorians pay a fire levy why do people on one side of the street get a different fire service than those on the other?
- Communities protected by career firefighters have faster response to fire protection and emergency medical situations.

- One fire service will provide better training greater flexibility and interoperability also better support for volunteers.

Some examples from my experience that show the failures of the current system.

- Attended a house fire with 20 volunteers on scene none of whom were trained in structural firefighting or breathing apparatus. Career fire fighters entered building and extinguished fire saving most of the building. If not for the career firefighters training most of the building would have been destroyed by fire.
- Career firefighters respond to calls within 2 minutes and arrive on scene within 8 minutes. Volunteers have 7 minutes to reach the station plus another 7 minutes to turnout if they don't get a response they are paged again.
- Attended a grass fire in CFA area a volunteer turned up on scene with a water Tanker alone he became a liability, because he had no one to help fight the fire and watch over him for his own safety.

Yours Sincerely,

Myles Hennessey

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