

To: Assistant Clerk Committees
Department of the Legislative Council
Fire Services Bill Select Committee
Parliament House, Spring Street
East Melbourne VIC 3002.

From: William Robinson



July 5th 2017

Dear Ministers,

I respectfully would like to have these comments presented to the select committee regarding the Fire Services Victoria EBA and CFA Presumptive Legislation.

The State Government is using the following figures:
1800 paid fire fighters and 1220 CFA stations but this does not reflect the true numbers. Yes there are 1800 paid fire fighters but there are also 60,000 volunteer fire fighters and there are 35 integrated stations.

The Andrew's Government and Peter Marshall are stating that people living in the area of the 35 integrated stations are getting second-rate service.

At present paid fire fighters staff the 35 integrated stations, 24 hours a day with the backup of the volunteer fire fighters who are also available 24 hours a day.

So changing the system to the Fire Rescue Victoria will not change the service delivery of the 35 integrated stations but it will slowly push the volunteers out as the FRV's new EBA is implemented.

The change to Fire Rescue Victoria will mean that FRV staff wearing CFA uniforms will run the CFA, but how can they serve two masters?

As CFA volunteers we had a good working relationship with the paid fire fighters but when the Andrew's Government and Peter Marshall decided to push this new EBA 12 months ago, this is when things started breaking down.

A politician from the Green's Party made the statement that this war between CFA and the union must stop. This war started when Daniel Andrew's Government agreed to an EBA without proper consultation with other parties.

The new FRV will also destroy the 125 year old MFB and it will cost the public a lot of money with little benefit because of the way the EBA is set up.

So far the Andrew's Government have removed any opposition to the new EBA or changes to the CFA by:
 MFB Chief Peter Rau - resigned
 CFA Chief Joe Buffone - resigned
 Minister Jane Garrett - resigned
 Chief Executive, Lucinda Nolan - resigned
 CFA Board - sacked

This is the list that I know of, however there could be more.

I also do not believe that the Presumptive Rights Legislation is fair and equitable as a volunteer has to prove their cancer was caused by attending a fire whereas a paid fire fighter does not.

I hope that the opposition parties can work together and put enough pressure on the Andrew's government to have the FRV's EBA and the CFA presumptive legislation rewritten to make them fair and equitable to all.

It seems that the Government has already decided the outcome of the select committee as stated in newsletter from Francis Diver. 21 June 2017



William Robinson
 Kalorama Mount Dandenong Volunteer Fire Brigade

Extract:

Fire services reform update

CFA notes the legislation to reform Victoria's fire services is expected to be referred to a select committee today for an advisory report.

This process will provide an opportunity for additional community engagement on aspects of the government's proposed reforms.

CFA welcomes this opportunity to continue to engage and consult with all Victorians. During this period, CFA will also continue to support and engage meaningfully with all staff and volunteers.

CFA acknowledges comments by the Emergency Services Minister, James Merlino MP, reaffirming the government's intention to implement reform of the fire services.

Former Fire and Rescue New South Wales Commissioner Greg Mullins will begin his work as the chair of the Fire Services Operational Implementation Committee.

This committee is tasked with looking at how the reforms will be practically rolled out across the state so the changes can be implemented before the next fire season.

Frances Diver
 CEO

