

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees,

I am a Station Officer employed by the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board and am currently in my 29th year as a Firefighter.

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

Having a brother as a volunteer in the CFA, we talk at length about the reform and how it would improve the safety of the public and all

Firefighters and the reduced time taken to control a fire or incident by the guarantee of having at least 7 firefighters on the fire ground in 8 minutes

or less.

I understand that the volunteers are vital but they do have their limitations and if we could reduce these limitations it has to be a positive thing.

I am also aware that there volunteer CFA stations that still have what they call the 'Captains choice' which means that the Captains of a station choose

A station that they want to attend instead the nearest station, as is the case with Lilydale CFA Captain has chosen Ringwood MFB as his' choice' and

Not the nearer station being Croydon MFB. Why not chose the closest station to respond so as to attend to the call for asap or is it for selfish reasons?

I would think that as a firefighter our job is to attend a call for emergency as fast and safe as practical would be in the best interest for the communities s

Safety.

I also believe that by employing all career Firefighters in one service would supply better community safety and protection with faster on scene times

and greater access to the Emergency Medical response role we currently provide.

The current reform areas are around the 35 integrated stations won't affect the other volunteer brigades and will only enhance bush fire response

and surge capacity. These 35 areas are no longer 'Country' areas, but are now highly urbanised with high density residential and industry included.

The reform will assist with standardising the career training and response standards. To have all career staff being employed under one fire service will

only enhance the safety to the community and greater support to the volunteers.

One thing we can always depend on in life is change, even if it is different from what we are used to, doesn't mean it is a bad thing. There is a saying

' if we always do what we've always done, we'll always get what we've always got ', this kind of thinking doesn't encourage forward thinking.

In closing I would say that this reform will only improve the service that is being provided by both services to Community that expects us to be there

When we are needed the most.

I hope you judge the reform on its merits and not the political hype.