

Dear assistant clerk committees

## INQUIRY INTO THE FIREFIGHTERS' PRESUMPTIVE RIGHTS COMPENSATION AND FIRE SERVICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (REFORM) BILL 2017

I have been a leading firefighter with the metropolitan fire brigade for ten years. I also hold the qualifications of teleboom operator and heavy rescue operator.

I have lived in the Hurstbridge area all my life and currently work at Thomastown fire station where I have done for eight of my ten years in the job.

In Hurstbridge I have volunteered as a basketball coach and also on the basketball club committee, also as a football coach, runner, medic, trainer, and have been a part of advisory committees for local council in regards to cycling matters.

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

I live in an area that is serviced by volunteer fire brigades and work in an area that sometimes turns out with volunteer fire brigades. I have a good understanding of some of the issues with our current fire services. Also my son is a volunteer fire fighter and I have many friends that are also volunteer fire fighters.

I am particularly concerned with the outdated system that has many areas zoned as country that are definitely not country any more, and contain many risks that did not exist there previously. This puts the public in danger and also the volunteer firefighters that are not trained or experienced in such risks in danger..From my own experience it is vitally important to have at least 7 firefighters dispatched and on scene within 8 minutes to have a good chance at a positive outcome.

The dispute that has been going on for years now has had large effect on many people and personally I know that it has damaged friendships that I once held. It has also on many occasion made things difficult for me in my own town. My son has decreased his involvement with the local fire brigade because of me being employed by the MFB . In towns like Hurstbridge, people that are volunteer fire fighters are also football , netball ,basketball, cricket coaches. They work in the local businesses and are involved in all facets of life in the town.

I speak regularly with many different volunteers and not one of them has ever said that they would stop being a volunteer firefighter if the reforms are inacted, They are usually very proud of what they do and understand their importance in a place where professional firefighters do not respond. One thing that we all agree on is that change is needed and it needs to happen now.

Yours sincerely

Paul James manning

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