

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees

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

My name is Paul Albietz. I am a Senior Station Officer with the Melbourne Fire Brigade (MFB) and have completed 14 years of service. I am an associate member of the Institute of Fire Engineers, have an Engineering and Science degree, and am a qualified Hazmat technician and Long duration breathing apparatus operator. I live in Windsor and currently work at the MFB South Melbourne fire station.

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

- Aligning the professional fire fighters from the CFA and MFB will lead to better fire protection for Victorians. It's that simple. It will standardise training, equipment, procedures, equipment etc. Both services currently work closely together across many aspects. However, a lot of the support functions are duplicated, standards, training and equipment differ. This results in inefficiencies, which, in time critical situations could pose a risk to both fire fighters and the community. Additionally, it is just not a good way to run a business, with the doubling up of many functions.
- The demographics and needs of Victoria has changed significantly since the MFB and CFA were established. What used to be Melbourne's fringe is now highly urbanised. Population density and dollar value now justify a uniform professional fire service.
- It is my understanding that employing all career firefighters in one fire service will not affect volunteer turnout or surge capacity, and only affects 35 integrated stations primary response areas – with no effect on other volunteer brigades or bushfire response
- Having all career staff being employed by one fire service will result in business efficiencies, an environment for best practices to emerge, consistency, and a more rewarding work environment.
- The extended EBA process within the MFB has negatively affected staff morale. This adds another level of stress to an already demanding job. I know this has affected the health, families and long term careers of firefighters. Not to mention the eroding of trust within the fire fighters. The longer this goes on, the worse it becomes. We really need to end it as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Albietz

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]