

**Kirra Vanzetti**

---

**From:** Cam Price [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 5 July 2017 11:04 PM  
**To:** LCSC  
**Subject:** Firefighters' Presumptive Rights Compensation and Fire Services Legislation Amendment (Reform) Bill 2017  
**Attachments:** 41 Collins St.pdf

Dear members of the select committee for the Inquiry into the Firefighters' Presumptive Rights Compensation and Fire Services Legislation Amendment (Reform) Bill 2017,

My name is Cameron Price and I write to you in support of the above mentioned bill as both a current serving volunteer at the Eynesbury Fire Brigade (commenced December 2012) and a professional career fire fighter at Geelong city (commenced February 2016).

In my 4.5 years as a volunteer at the Eynesbury Fire Brigade I have served as a fire fighter, a communications officer and 3rd lieutenant on the brigade management team which has given me a great insight into the running of a volunteer brigade. The Eynesbury fire brigade is approximately 45km West of Melbourne and 12km south of Melton which is the next closest brigade which is also an integrated station. In the 4.5 years I have been a member of the CFA, we have interacting regularly with the staff and volunteers at Melton including being trained at their station and having them visit us at our station. All interactions have been professional at every stage including every job we attend with Melton as they are included on every call we have in our area in case we are unable to attend a call due to being at work/events etc as we are volunteers and cannot guarantee to turn out to calls every time. This will NOT change.

In answer to the term of reference 'effect on volunteer engagement and participation in fire service delivery' no members of our brigade have said they will quit the brigade or not turn out to jobs or training if the fire service reform legislation is passed as there will be no changes to how we do things. On the contrary Melton will hopefully receive extra manning (7 on the fire ground) which will assist them should they have to come to our area for a structure fire and we are either unable to respond or respond with members that are not qualified to go into structures to do search and rescue. This change means that our community gets better protection and the firefighters responding have a better chance to safely complete a search and rescue if required and return to their families at the end of the shift.

I have briefly touched on the terms of reference 'impact on fire service delivery across Victoria' in the paragraph above but would like to share with you a personal experience as a career firefighter that recently occurred whilst on shift. I was working day shift at Geelong city on Thursday the 25<sup>th</sup> May 2017 and at approximately 2.15pm we received a support page for a structure fire for smoke issuing from a unit and upon turning out within 90 seconds we received further information that the occupant had potentially lit the fire and was still inside the premise. The job was located in the Geelong West brigade primary area which is a fully volunteer brigade so as per the CAD assignment tables Geelong pumper 2 with 3 firefighters and Geelong Ladder platform with 2 firefighters was dispatched to the job. Once we arrived on scene, it was found that the unit had smoke issuing as well as flames and the windows and doors were boarded up making entry very difficult. The following is an account of what each person was responsible for in the next 5 minutes:

#### Geelong Pumper2

Senior Station officer – completing a walk around of the premise, isolating gas/power – tasking crews, communicating back and forth with Vic fire requesting other appliances/gas/power etc.

Firefighter #1 – driver is responsible for engaging the pump and assisting crews to get water on the fire as quick as possible and then find water mains to replenish the 2000 litres of water we have on the truck

Firefighter #2 – Responsible for getting water on to the fire as quickly as possible to try and give any victims the best chance of survival

#### Geelong Ladder Platform

Leading Firefighter #1 – First crew to put on breathing apparatus and make entry to search for the occupant  
 Firefighter #2 - First crew to put on breathing apparatus and make entry to search for the occupant

Missing crew (to make 7 on the fire ground as per part of the reforms)

Leading Firefighter #1 – backup BA crew to assist with search and rescue and backup for first crew should the first crew go down.

Firefighter #2 - backup BA crew to assist with search and rescue and backup for first crew should the first crew go down.

This particular job was much different to a regular job as the occupant had blocked entries and exits with furniture and large appliances so entry took longer than normal and more water was utilised to try to slow the spread of the fire and make the environment liveable for the occupants for longer. While this was progressing my task was to get more water into the truck to ensure the safety of the crew inside the burning unit which can be either from the town mains (hydrant) or another fire appliance. Unfortunately the Geelong West volunteers were not able to respond their truck meaning we had no backup on scene as it wasn't until the 7 minute mark of the job that another brigade was requested due to the non-response of Geelong West (apart from 1 firefighter in the Geelong west car). To put the time requirements into perspective, our truck holds 2000 litres of water and our hoses put out up to 475 litres per minute, meaning that we can empty the tank out in just over 5 minutes with 1 hose and on this occasion we were using 2 which gives us 2.5 minutes. The nearest hydrant was found after much searching under a parked vehicle and due to having no support I made use of some police officers and a power company worker to assist me in breaking into the car to move it and run hose to get water into the truck, by this stage our crew in the hose had to retreat due to lack of water and the chance of survival of anybody in the unit was effectively 0.

I want to be perfectly clear that I put no blame on the Geelong West brigade for not responding as they and all other brigades do the very best they can for no remuneration but unfortunately work and family commitments mean that time is already stretched and it is not possible for them to respond to all incidents as quickly as professional career firefighters can.

Attached is a PDF transcript of the radio traffic for this job taken directly out of the Fire reporting system of the CFA and below is an extract from the transcript outlining the times of each critical action. I would like you to try and put yourselves in our position at this job knowing that there is quite possibly somebody trapped and potentially dying and we have to make split second decisions that can put our own lives at risk.

SC: UNIT ISSUING SMOKE	25/05/2017 14:13:07
MG: GONGP2 AND LP ACK FURTHER	25/05/2017 14:16:24
MG: TO GONGP2 - GEWE HAVE NYR DO YOU REQ A FURTHER BRIG? /AFFRIMA ND GONGR	25/05/2017 14:20:15
WB: GONGP2 - SSO HOVELL SF NYUC , POWER AND GAS CO RQD	25/05/2017 14:20:35
MG: GEWEFC ACK FURTHER	25/05/2017 14:21:46
MG: GONGR ACK FURTHER	25/05/2017 14:21:59
MG: CORO APPL ACK FURTHER	25/05/2017 14:23:21
MG: COROP1 ACK GONG ONSCENE AND WILL CANCEL AND LET COROTB PROCEED	25/05/2017 14:25:09
MG: CTRL - PRIMARY SEARCH COMPLETE AND NO OCCUPANT FOUND	25/05/2017 14:35:16

Having had the correct amount of firefighters arrive on scene in a timely manner would have greatly reduced the time taken to search this house and the risk our crews took in entering the house with no backup. This happens throughout Victoria on a regular basis, sometimes we are lucky and there are no fatalities but sometimes we are not so lucky. While I understand it is not possible to man fire stations across Victoria with professional career fire fighters, it is possible to look at the risk or each area and ensure that risk is adequately covered and the people putting their lives on the line daily are suitably protected.

Lastly, I'd like to add that since becoming a professional career firefighter I have seen and spoken to many people that have been in the job for a lot longer than I have. There are so many weary faces with the constant battles in politics, media and in some cases the general public when all we want is a safe work environment for ourselves with

the ability to provide the community with a quality adaptive and agile service. The reforms do this and more importantly they will bring this long ugly dispute to an end and we can get on with what we do and move forward.

Thank you for your time

Cameron Price



**Cameron Price Firefighter**

Geelong City Fire Station – 69 McKillop Street Geelong Vic 3220

T: 03 5221 2755 F: 03 5221 2185 E: [C.Price@cfa.vic.gov.au](mailto:C.Price@cfa.vic.gov.au)

Protecting lives and property



[cfa.vic.gov.au](http://cfa.vic.gov.au)

ORDINARY PEOPLE. EXTRAORDINARY ACHIEVEMENTS. 2017 FIRE AWARENESS AWARDS

Have you or someone you know, developed a great fire project in your community? **APPLY NOW**

Entries close: 17 Sept 2017  
Supported by **RACV**

This email is for official use only. The information in this communication is privileged and confidential, intended only for the use of the individual or entity named. If you are not the intended recipient, any dissemination, copying or use of the information is strictly prohibited. Any personal information in this email must be handled in accordance with the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) and applicable laws. If you have received this transmission in error please inform us by return email and then delete it immediately from your system.