

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees

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

It is with disappointment that I feel there is a need for me to write this email and also ask that my name and contact details be treated as confidential and for the sole purpose of this inquiry as my employer feels I should not have an opinion in this Bill.

I am a leading firefighter with the MFB for over 10years currently working in the Southern Zone.

I have also had previous experience as a volunteer with the SES NSW (2 years) and the CFA at the Keysborough Fire Brigade (5 years).

I have a strong sense of community and what it means to create an environment better for the interactions we have with one another. Therefore whether volunteers or paid members respond to an emergency to render assistance the priority should always be focused on those needing that help and ensuring the situation doesn't escalate.

This requires a rapid response and sufficient people to get the job done with the training and equipment to do so. Volunteering with the CFA showed me that response times especially during business hours are unreliable in terms of response times and skill sets required for the job and sometimes even to just get the truck out the door. This is not to say that urban volunteering as a firefighter is a waste of time and effort as there are many situations not as time critical that trained and well-resourced brigades are invaluable for.

Sadly the cruel political climate we live in where the focus is on getting elected and cutting operational budgets for bonuses have completely obscured the core service an emergency service should provide. With previous reviews and even a Royal Commission we finally have a government that is trying to action one of the hardest recommendations all have proposed. As the population of Victorian municipalities increase and a need for a professional, career firefighting service is required there should be consistent deliverables that should be met that would be better managed by one organisation (such as the proposed Fire Rescue Victoria).

I hope this Firefighters' Presumptive Rights Compensation and Fire Services Legislation Amendment (Reform) Bill 2017 succeeds and all firefighters (volunteer and career) can go about their business with a government, management and hopefully the general public that respects and values the contribution we all give in assisting people in their worse moments.

Please feel free to contact me to discuss any further information you care to explore.

Regards,

MFB Leading Firefighter