

Assistant Clerks Committees
Department of the Legislative Council
Fire Services Bill Select Committee
Parliament House, Spring St
East Melbourne Vic 3002

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees

My name is David Cotterill and I am a Station Officer with the Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB).

I am currently stationed at the Victorian Emergency Management Training College (VEMTC) and my current role is as an assistant coordinator with Station Officer Course 54.

I have been with the MFB for 17 years and in that time some of the qualifications I have obtained include

- Diploma of Firefighting Management
- Certificate IV in Firefighting Operations
- Certificate IV in Training and Assessment
- FRNSW Structural Firefighting Instructors Course.

It is as a qualified Structural Firefighting Instructor that I appeal to you to consider favourably the formation of Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV)

Today's world is a far cry from what it was 30 years ago. Where things used to be made out of natural products, such as wood, cotton, wool etc, they are now predominantly made out of synthetics which overwhelmingly contain hydrocarbons.

These hydrocarbons burn faster and far hotter than any natural material. From a firefighting point of view this simply means that we have less time to do the same job as we have always done. Protecting life and property.

Extensive studies which have been conducted by recognised research groups, have found that in the 1970s a smouldering cigarette on a blanket could turn into a fully involved room fire in approximately 17 minutes. Today, with nearly all our household goods, clothing and even the building material made from synthetic materials, a smouldering cigarette on a doona could become a fully involved room fire in as little as **2 1/2 minutes**. I'll let you guess how long this will take to be a fully involved house fire.

It is with this in mind that it is vital that FRV should be introduced and that where the population allows, full time professional firefighters should be stationed so they can provide the quickest response possible. This will also provide these communities with an EMR response (almost always within 8 minutes) that they would not otherwise have.

As I mentioned above, our places of comfort and security can quickly turn into disaster. That's why it is so important to have a minimum of 7 on the fireground.

This also provides firefighters with an added level of protection and assistance while they undertake their duties.

If you have any queries please feel free to contact me at any time. My mobile number is

[REDACTED]

Yours Sincerely

David Cotterill