

PRESUMPTIVE RIGHTS COMPENSATION AND FIRE SERVICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (REFORM) BILL 2017

To whom it may concern,

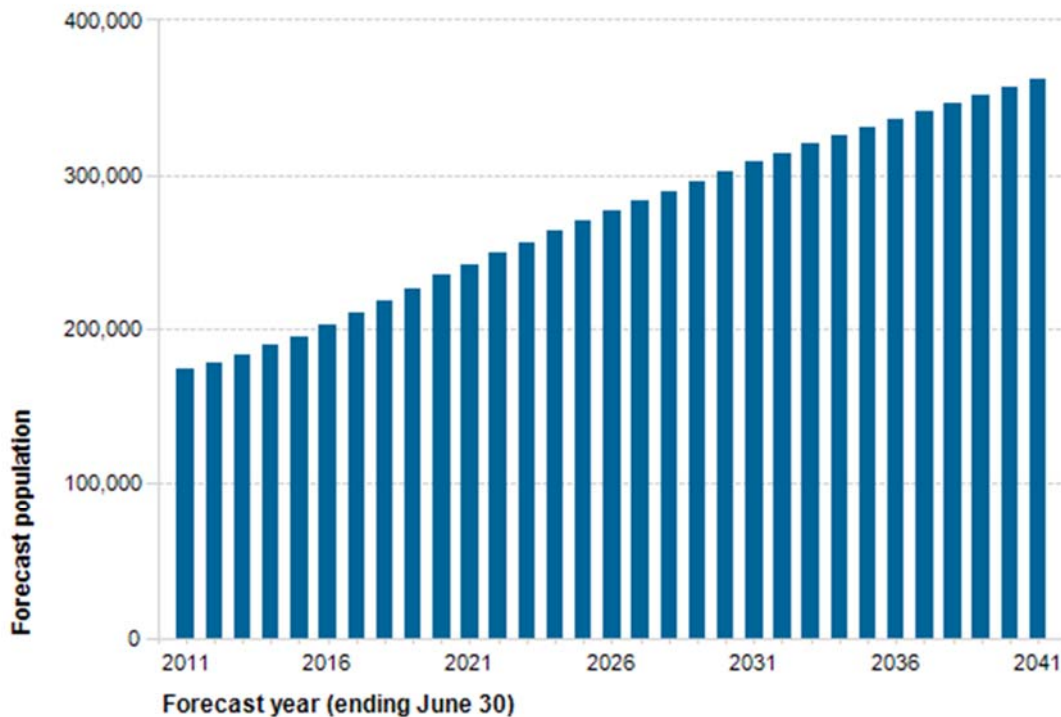
My name is Benjamin Glasson, I am a professional fire fighter within the Country Fire Authority. I have been employed by the CFA for 12 months working out of Caroline Springs fire brigade.

I am writing this submission in support of the proposed reform of the fire services in Victoria.

Before joining as a professional firefighter I volunteered at Woodend CFA for 6 Years. I'm now living in Sunbury which has an intergraded fire station covering 37,023 people and growing, the closest career fire station to Sunbury is Greenvale CFA. As a resident of Sunbury it concerns me that living in a town of 37,000 plus residents and our suburb being serviced by a single career CFA pumper or Tanker with a crew of four. This population is set to grow substantially over the next 30 years. See below a forecast of population growth for the city of Hume.

Forecast population

Hume City



Population and household forecasts, 2011 to 2041, prepared by .id, June 2017.



As a past volunteer I'm not discounting the Volunteers in my suburb as they do a great job sacrificing their time to help protect the community they live in. From experience it is challenging to attend fire calls whenever paged as a volunteer, as the name suggests it is a volunteer role and does not pay the bills, work always came first and as most people do I worked 8-10 hours a day 5-6 days per week. These time constraints made it difficult to further my skills and qualifications I required to affectively respond to fire calls.

In a built up suburb such as Sunbury relying on a volunteer response 24hrs per day is unfair on those volunteers and is unfair on the career fire crews expecting sufficient qualified back up.

This brings me to sufficient skills mixes on trucks, as there is no requirement to have anything more than minimum skills to be allowed to jump onto a truck and attend a fire call. This isn't a problem when it comes to man power at grass and scrub fires but when it comes to most other incidents we attend these skills are generally not sufficient. In my experience if the volunteers do happen to respond they could be manned with firefighters that once arrive on scene find themselves standing around and are no help to those crews that are in need of relief. In suburbs like Sunbury professional crews deserve to know that if responded to a structure fire and are required to conduct an internal fire attack that they have the sufficient back up if conditions change and they require assistance.

By having guaranteed two truck response attending fire calls these situations will not occur, incident controllers are aware of the skills that are attending the fire and therefore is able to better control a scene, without the doubt of potentially not having enough skilled firefighters on scene.

Yours sincerely

Ben Glasson

Firefighter, Caroline springs Fire brigade.