

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees

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

I am Grant Kidd an Operations Officer for the CFA located Portland Fire Brigade within District 04 with over 25 years' service within the CFA has a volunteer and permanent Fire fighter. Throughout my time within the CFA, I have worked at varies locations across Victoria from Mildura, Morwell Rosebud Boronia and Portland

As an operation Officer in district 4, I believe that the impact to volunteers within this district from the reform will be negligible. Support to the volunteers within the district will be maintained, the existing command structures will still be in place with the utilization of operational fire-fighters fulfilling the roles of Operations Officers and Operations managers being employed by FRV but continuing their roles within the CFA.

The benefits from this reform will have a greater impact on the community of Portland and Victoria in a positive manner. By all career staff being employed by the one fire service, the opportunity for Portland fire station to move from its current staffing level (day staffing Monday to Friday 0700-1800) to 24 hour service will progress faster, this will be achieved by removing the current policies and procedures that are in place between the CFA and MFB. These reforms will greatly increase the opportunity for more lateral movement.

This progression from a day staffing level to a 24 hour service will enhance the emergency capability to the community of Portland (including the Port of Portland one of Australia's largest Port's) and surrounding area, with EMR (emergency medical response), a guaranteed emergency response with specialist skills (ground observing, Hazmat, maritime fire fighting, technical rescue), and enhanced opportunity for training and knowledge transfer for the District 04 volunteers by utilize the skills and experiences of the FRV fire-fighters, provide a IMT (incident Management team) capability for larger scale incidents.

Throughout my time within the CFA the most significant changes and impacts to volunteerism has been mainly from outside influences, the combination of stagged wage growth at around the 2% mark, increases in house prices, generational change (X, Y and Z) and a change to the amount and how we spend our spear time has seen the a greater pressure on volunteering across the board, this is more clearly seen within the greater metropolitan areas like Ferntree Gully, Lilydale and Officer. Similar imparts are also affecting the rural areas of CFA as well, with an aging population, rural decline younger people moving away from farming and a change from existing farming practices to larger scale operation utilizing less people or plantations.

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

The reasons why as a fire-fighter that it is important to have guaranteed backup - guaranteed that two trucks with at least 7 fire-fighters will be dispatched within 8 minutes is for my safety and that of my crew, being able to adhere to the Chiefs standing Orders. What that response means for better community is better safety and protection for when there are at their most vulnerable.

The reform will benefit volunteers as it has included a package to assist with volunteer recruitment and retention across the CFA and by providing the CFA with it's a future and giving it back its identify. The CFA can once again be a fully Volunteer origination providing support the areas it has always been designed to, the CFA can focus on the issues that it currently faces and set clear objectives for it future.

Yours sincerely,
Grant Kidd

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