

The Secretary
Legislative Council Select Committee
Parliament House, Spring Street
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

Dear Committee Members,

SUBJECT: The Firefighters Presumptive Rights Compensation and Fire Service Legislation Amendment (Reform) Bill 2017'

Firstly, thank you for the opportunity to provide some feedback to the committee on the proposed Bill.

The following response is from me as a current member of an integrated station that borders on the existing MFB and CFA boundary, affected by these changes and as one who is deeply concerned for the community that I serve.

I have been a member of the Eltham Fire Brigade for 30 years and overall have served as a CFA volunteer in excess of 45 years in senior roles within Group and Brigade positions within four different communities across Victoria as I changed my employment locations.

In my years of serving in integrated brigades in both Bendigo and Eltham Fire Brigades (totalling some 35 years), I have always been committed in providing a first class fire service to the community that I served in, and also was committed to the successful integrated delivery of service at these locations.

The quick introduction of this Bill without adequate consultation and a complete lack of detail make it difficult to analyse and provide important comment. As such, I urge the committee to extend the period of submissions for at least two months to allow for an appropriate level of consultation to provide unhurried input and to obtain contribution from the relevant Stakeholders to this highly significant Bill.

By extending the period it will also ensure compliance by the committee, of the Country Fire Authority Act 1958, which "requires that the Government of Victoria and the Authority to commit to consulting with Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria Incorporated on behalf of volunteer officers and members on any matter that might reasonably be expected to affect them".

I therefor stress that members of the Fire Services Bill Select Committee allow for additional time so as to permit for detailed analysis of the proposed Legislation to be undertaken, which would include:

- Potential benefits to the Community and impacts to Community delivery outcomes;
- Potential changes in response capability;
- Changed responsibilities of integrated members working within Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV) response areas;
- Proposed process of allocation of brigade assets between FRV and CFA who will be collocated in FRV locations;
- Potential training delivery changes;
- Secondment of FRV employees to CFA.

My belief is that it is imperative that extra time is provided for considered input and also to assist stabilise the fire services and regain Community confidence.

Protecting life and property in our communities should be foremost in our minds and not clouded by unknown changes to our Fire services.

Yours sincerely

Brian

Brian Sandlant

