

Kirra Vanzetti

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 6 July 2017 9:03 PM
To: LCSC
Subject: Fire Services Bill 2017

Good Morning,

My name is Stephen Draper and I have been employed as a permanent firefighter with the Melbourne Metropolitan Fire Brigade for 41 years 10 months. I have held the rank of Station Officer for 35 years and have spent nearly all my operational time stationed in the northern suburbs, in particular the northern perimeter stations on the MFB/CFA boundary. I have seen these 'country' areas become increasingly populated as one would expect in a growing metropolis. Although the amenities provided for these people continue to grow with the population their access to a professional fire service has faltered. This has led to delays in response times with some people becoming territorial and cancelling support crews when they were needed. This was a regular occurrence in the Greenvale area. We quite often were given a message over the radio that we were no longer required. This led to permanent crews ignoring these calls and proceeding to the call only to find a volunteer on scene in a private car and no firefighting equipment. This has since been rectified by building a new station with permanent firefighters in the heart of Greenvale.

The delays in calling for support from the MFB to Craigieburn has also ceased since the placement of a permanent crew in this thriving town. This has led to less damage due to quicker response times as well as the provision of emergency medical response by trained first responders.

The largest and most populated area on the boundary is Epping. Epping has been a city for 30 plus years but still has only a volunteer fire service. I have responded to a Fire Indicator Panel at a factory in Epping and have had to wait at the door for 20-30 minutes for the CFA volunteers to arrive only to have a person arrive in a car with the keys to the factory so we could make access. When asked where their truck was the reply there 'no approved driver had showed up'. This would have meant that any fire north of the station would have had no response. There is a Rescue vehicle at Epping which also would not have been able to respond as a trained driver would have to be able to drive the pumper first before being trained in road rescue.

I live in a country town 70km north of Melbourne and know that the state of Victoria cannot exist without volunteers in the fire service. I also believe from practical experience that larger towns and cities do necessitate the requirement for a Fire Service that can respond to all sorts of emergencies at all hours in a timely manner.

Yours Respectfully,

Stephen Draper

