

**Kirra Vanzetti**

---

**From:** Simon Ryan [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 6 July 2017 9:46 PM  
**To:** LCSC  
**Subject:** Submission for fire services amendment bill

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees,

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

I am a level three firefighter with the Metropolitan Fire Brigade based in the Eastern suburbs. I have been in this position for 3 years. I live in Chirnside Park which is just outside the metropolitan fire district (MFD) in a volunteer fire brigade area.

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

- I regularly respond to calls in CFA designated areas and see the vast differences in fire services provided between the MFD and CFA areas. This can be from one side of a road to the other. It impacts on the safety of the public and the personnel responding to the calls. People in highly urbanised environments deserve the same level of fire cover no matter the side of a road they live on. They deserve to be able to expect sufficient resources to arrive at their house within a short timeframe when they dial 000. Currently this is not the case. Regularly volunteer brigades fail to respond to calls.
- When responding with volunteers, we as MFB firefighters are putting ourselves at risk as we are unsure if a volunteer brigade will respond to the call. If they do respond we are unaware if there will be any volunteers that can wear a breathing apparatus and actively be involved in firefighting/ rescues. This is exacerbated for CFA professional firefighters as they rely on volunteers for their safety.
- When assigning appliances to be turned out to calls in volunteer areas the staff at that brigade get to decide who can come into their area, not always on who is closest or fastest but who they get along with or like.
- Volunteer brigades have downgraded calls without being on scene or investigating calls.
- Turning out with volunteer brigades resembles a circus as there seems to be no logical set response for calls. Within the MFD resources are allocated to calls as they are made and upon investigation/numerous calls more appliances added. In CFA areas I have been to calls where 4 appliances have turned out to and booked on scene to a 2 car motor vehicle accident with no people trapped and no fire. In the MFD this would warrant 1 appliance with the other 3 being able to still provide cover to the community rather than leave areas without any services.

When I first graduated from recruits I was station at the Ringwood Fire Station. From this station we responded into CFA areas in Wantirna, Mooroolbark, Croydon North and Boronia. On my first call into Mooroolbark CFA area (at least a 15 minute lights and siren drive) the rest of the crew informed me that we had to 'take a friend' (otherwise meaning take another MFB appliance with us) as Mooroolbark regularly fail to respond to calls and cannot be relied upon as support.

In May of this year while at Vermont South our appliance was responded to a reported structure fire at the Nation Australia Bank Data Centre on Lewis Road Wantirna. This area is within CFA area and covered by volunteer and professional staff. On this night the professional staff were at another call. While on route to this call the Boronia volunteer appliance downgraded all oncoming appliance

from code one (emergency conditions) to code three (normal road driving). At this stage we were 400-500 meters short of the call on a straight road and could see there was no other appliances at the scene. When we arrived we were the first appliance on scene. This building holds all of NAB's banking data and is vital resource for NAB. The officer on our appliance and our whole crew could not believe that anyone would slow an emergency response to such an important building without investigating the area. How were they to know this reported fire was a false alarm or not without even sighting the building. Unfortunately this is not an isolated incident.

Yours Sincerely,

Simon Ryan

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]