

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees:

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

1. I am a current serving CFA Station Officer and have been employed with CFA for the past 10 years. Over these years I have worked at 23 of the 35 integrated CFA Brigades across the state.

During these years of service I have been awarded the:

- CFA 15 Year Service Award (2016)
- CFA National Emergency Medal Victoria Fires 2009 (2013)
- CFA 10 Year Service Award (2011)
- CFA Chief Officers Commendation (Hallam 02/2008)
- CFA Chief Officers Commendation (Dandenong 01/2008)
- CFA Chief Officers Award (Most Practical Fire Fighter 01/2007).

I also hold qualifications in the following specialist areas:

- EMR Qualified
- Hazmat Detection Technician CBR
- Road Accident Rescue Operator
- Rope Rescue Technician
- Trainer / Assessor
- Senior First Aid - Level II
- Level One Driver Educator
- Fire Safe Kids Presenter.

2. I currently live in Kallista (Dandenong Ranges) and work at CFA South Warrandyte (Park Orchards).
3. I also volunteer within my local community at Kallista-The-Patch Rural Fire Brigade (CFA) and have continued to do so for over 16 years.
4. I am writing this submission in support of the proposed reform of the fire services for the following reasons:
 - As a firefighter it is imperative that our safety is paramount, therefore having guaranteed backup with a guarantee that two firefighting appliances with at least seven (7) firefighters will be dispatched and on scene within eight minutes (8).
 - Having this response, where two firefighting appliances and at least seven (7) firefighters are responding within 90 seconds upon them receiving their emergency call-out, means greater community safety and service delivery / expectation.
 - The reform areas are around 35 integrated stations Primary Response Areas in a Highly Urbanised / High Residential area with any number of other risk profiles.
 - The reform will assist in standardisation of equipment (cost saving when tendering for larger volumes of equipment).
 - Again the reform will assist in standardisation of centralised career training, response / specialist response standards and equipment where required.

Continued:

4. I am writing this submission in support of the proposed reform of the fire services for the following reasons:
 - The reform will benefit the current and continuing work the CFA volunteers by including a package to assist with volunteer recruitment and retention across the CFA as well as funding for volunteer station upgrades.
 - The reform will not affect CFA volunteer turnout / surge capacity, it will only enhance firefighting capacity / response in line with community expectations of Emergency Services Response 'Service Delivery'.
 - The additional strain which has been placed on my work place and family life due to this current situation is taking an immense total, moving forward in a new direction employed under Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV) has a bright future for all concerned and the communities of Victoria.

5. The following examples are my experiences which demonstrates the failures of the current structure:
 - Whilst working a nightshift at Eltham Fire Brigade (CFA integrated), we were responded to **support Warrandyte Fire Brigade** (CFA Volunteer) to a fire alarm that had occurred at a nursing home (1 Nnisfallen Ave Templestowe @ 0334 - 5/7/2017). As a huge life risk, Warrandyte failed to respond due to not having a driver of their pumper. Templestowe (MFB) arrived on scene first (crew of three) and then Eltham second (crew of four), both crews were on scene within six minutes to provide the expected service delivery from the community.

 - Whilst working at South Warrandyte (CFA integrated), we were responded to **support Warrandyte Fire Brigade** (CFA Volunteer) to a chimney fire (16 Kyrenia Court Warrandyte @ 1935 -10/6/2017). South Warrandyte crews arrived on scene first to a support call (with Warrandyte then MFB Templestowe). Warrandyte's driver was also the crew leader, which rendered their appliance without a pump operator due to the fact that the crew leader (driver) went forward to assist / manage the incident (after an official handover of the incident from South Warrandyte Incident Controller).

These are only two examples of the daily occurrences across the state where by the community believe that their worth is protected by a volunteer CFA response, only for it to be a roll of the dice that the local volunteer brigade are in the neighbourhood and can respond in the appropriate time, with the appropriate skills mix to deal with the incident.

As a community minded member, I know what I would choose, that is reform!