

**Kirra Vanzetti**

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**From:** NUGENT, William [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, 7 July 2017 9:42 AM  
**To:** LCSC  
**Subject:** INQUIRY INTO THE FIREFIGHTERS' PRESUMPTIVE RIGHTS COMPENSATION AND FIRE SERVICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (REFORM) BILL 2017

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees

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

My name is William Nugent and I am a Station Officer of the Melbourne Fire Brigade, I have 32 years' service as of September this year.

My qualifications include 27 years as an officer in charge of a station and firefighting qualifications including Chemical Biological and Radiological Skilled, First Aid and Emergency Medical Response, Juvenile Fire Awareness Practitioner, Wildfire 1 and 2 Accredited, Confined Space Firefighting and Rescue, Mark 3, 4, and 5 pumper and pumper tanker operator,..... to name just a few that I have accumulated over my years of service.

I live in Aberfeldie and currently work at St. Albans fire station ( MFB no 41), I have been stationed mostly in western zone during my career and often in the outer lying stations where we turn out into the CFA area with CFA personnel.

In my time as a firefighter I have seen the growth of the outer lying urban areas to the extent where residents of these areas are being provided substandard fire services based on boundaries and practises that are 50 years old. This is a major concern for me as a firefighter . I enjoy the protection provided in the area where I live in Aberfeldie, but the density and population of say " Sydenham or Hillside " is no different but are covered by volunteers , which means an extra (approx.) 4 minute delay in getting firefighters to an incident or fire. The fire services reform will address these issues which I am all in favour for.

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

As a firefighter it is important to have guaranteed backup - guaranteed that two trucks with at least 7 firefighters will be dispatched within 8 minutes which to these urban areas response means for better community safety and protection.

I have read the proposed reform documents and would like to make the following comments.

Employing all career firefighters in one fire service will not affect volunteer turnout or surge capacity Volunteer support will be maintained with operational firefighters (OO's OMs etc. being employed by FRV but continuing their roles through an arrangement with CFA)

The reform areas are around the 35 integrated stations primary response areas – no effect on other volunteer brigades or bushfire response

The 35 areas are now highly urbanised – high residential and other risks

The reform will assist with standardisation of career training/specialist response/response standards and equipment etc.

It is better to have all career staff being employed by one fire service.

The damage the disputation in the workplace has been traumatic and damaging for myself and colleagues and we just want it to be over.

The reform will benefit volunteers as it has included a package to assist with volunteer recruitment and retention across the CFA; and includes funding for volunteer station upgrades etc.

**As an example of the current shortcomings of the current system.**

For the last 15 years I have been station at Keilor (mfb 51), Taylors lakes (mfb 48) and St. Albans (mfb 41) , all stations which are close to or on the western boundary of the Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board area.

Whilst at these stations I have attended many fires , incidents and EMR calls past this boundary and into the CFA area. Some of these fires and incidents have involved fatalities. In all cases I have experienced trepidation as to what services the CFA will provide to these calls. I have never been in doubt as to what the MFB can provide me as they are only a radio call away for more appliances or personnel, where the CFA is a mixture of full and part time , and that mixture can vary largely as with the qualifications of their personnel who attend. We (the MFB) have different vehicles, different uniform, different procedures, different training, different radio channels to the CFA just to name a few issues that affect us daily. Having all fire services under one authority is well overdue.

The type of service currently provided to these urban areas may have been appropriate many years ago when the areas were paddocks when the procedures were implemented, but today the residents of these areas deserve better, and I believe the fire services reform will start the process of addressing these issues and go a long way to solving it. I would prefer not to describe any particular call or incident in these areas that I have attended that has left me gobsmacked with the CFA’s response, suffice to say many of us have come to accept that we could not do anything about it, until now.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter,

Best regards,

William Nugent

*Station Officer 3906  
St.Albans Fire Station  
Metropolitan Fire Brigade*



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