

By email: LCSC@parliament.vic.gov.au
Dear Assistant Clerk Committees

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

Hello,

My name is Peter Basset and I am a qualified Firefighter with the CFA, I have been a professional Firefighter for five years and and a volunteer for a further five years. I currently reside in Frankston and work at Dandenong fire station. I have been awarded a 10 year service medal and have gained specialist qualifications such as heavy rescue, 42 meter ladder platform, emergency medical responder and steep angle rope rescue in my time.

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

- It is extremely important for me as a firefighter to have guaranteed back up with 7 firefighters on the fire ground within 8 minutes. Not having a guaranteed response could be a major safety hazard for my self and my crew members.
- Victorians would be comforted to know that no matter what time of day it was, a fire truck or specialist unit will have a guaranteed response to their emergency in a timely manner. Our state is rapidly expanding and although our dedicated volunteers do a fantastic job a response cannot always be guaranteed.
- This reform is integral for Victoria and the 35 intergrated stations that protect highly urbnaised – high residential risk communities. Its time to bring the fire service in line with 21st century and not continue with a model drawn up in the 1950's. Suburbs such as Craigieburn, Cranbourne and Dandenong are no longer semi rural farming towns and they deserve a modern day fire service.
- The reform will assist with the standardisation of career training/ specialist response standards and equipment making the new look fire service more efficient and professional.
- There has been a significant toll to moral amongst professional firefighters through this dispute as we have often been relentlessly slandered in the press. I personally had some great relationships that were formed from my time as a CFA volunteer that have since broken down. I have found that this has happened due to confusion about what this fire service reform means for the future of volunteerism. The truth is that volunteerism will not be affected and will only be enhanced with extra funding for recruitment and retention and funding for station upgrades.

- 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

Yours sincerely,
Peter Basset,

