

Mr

Kenneth

Hughes

0419 572406

mwest.irb@bigpond.com

Private Individual

Submission Content:

This submission is in response to the Terms of Reference on the restructuring of Victoria's Fire Service as contemplated by the Firefighter's Presumptive Rights Compensation and Fire Services Legislation Amendment (Reform Bill) 2017.

a. Impact on fire service delivery across Victoria

When structuring an organisation it is imperative that the goals of the organisation be considered. To achieve the goals of an emergency organisation, communication within the organisation is of vital importance. The Government's proposal to split the fire fighters into CFA (Volunteer Fire Fighters) and Fire Rescue Victoria (Paid Fire Fighters) will definitely hinder communications. During a major fire emergency critical communication will be required between support staff and management (paid fire fighters) and volunteer fire fighters. Communication between agencies will never be as good as communication within an agency. It would appear that the structure has been made to solve an industrial problem rather than considering the vital communications, as required above.

b. Effect on volunteer engagement and participation in Fire Service Delivery

It would appear to me that the Volunteers will become "the poor relation" of the emergency services, which is already having the effect of stifling morale and recruitment volunteer numbers, now and into the future. This is already evident outside the metropolitan area and is gradually increasing. The drive by the Fire-Fighters Union to 'push' for more membership, I see, as being detrimental to the well-being and ongoing engagement and participation of the current CFA volunteers and any possible new recruits.

c. Short term and long term cost impact on fire service provision

Smaller numbers of volunteer fire fighters will require greater numbers of paid fire fighters, which will eventually have a negative effect on the cost impact to the Government on the provision of a quality fire service.

d. Underlying policy rationale

No comment submitted