

LCSC@parliament.vic.gov.au

Dear Select Committee,

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

My name is [REDACTED], I am a Senior Station Officer (SSO) with CFA, stationed at South Morang Fire Station. I started there originally as the start up Officer when the brigade became integrated on June 1, 2015. I have been associated with CFA for 14 years this September; 3 years as a volunteer and 11 years as a Professional Fire Fighter.

I am qualified as an Incident Controller of all incidents ranging from Structure fires, Non Structure Fire, Grass and Scrub Fires (and as a Strike team Leader and Sector Commander at large campaign fires), Rescues/ Incidents (MVA, Confined Space, Trench rescue and other technical rescues), Hazmat /Chemical Biological Radiological (CBR) incidents and Emergency Medical Response (EMR).

Since becoming a professional Fire Fighter, I was awarded the National Emergency Medal (Victorian 2009 Fires) for my 28 days of service during that terrible 35 days in Victorian History.

I live in Eltham and work primarily in South Morang but also work around the state on occasions.

Before joining CFA I was a volunteer Life Saver for three summers (1996-1989). Whilst at University (Studying Architecture) I was a volunteer with the SES for two and a half years (1994-1996) whilst working part time in Architectural Offices.

After completing my Under Grad and Post Grad Degrees in Architecture, I joined the Australian Army and voluntarily undertook (and passed) the selection process to serve as a Commando.

In 2000 I continued to practice Architecture, working on a variety of projects ranging from home renovations through to multimillion dollar commercial developments; until becoming a Professional Fire Fighter in 2006.

I am writing this submission to show my support for the proposed reform of the fire service in Victoria. I hope that for the first time in my career I will finally be treated with respect as Professional Fire Fighter and not treated like a second class citizen and referred to as the 'payed help' \*

\*Reference from a former CFA CEO and Board members about the Professional Fire Fighters in CFA.

I wish to exercise my rights of having this submission remain confidential and therefore not have it published.

***Impact of fire service delivery across Victoria:***

The proposed Fire Service reform will provide an improved service delivery to the ever-increasing population and meet the ongoing demands Victorias population growth requires. Currently in areas such where I work (South Morang) the growth in population and the increase in construction and infrastructure to support that growth isn't being matched with Fire Service protection. CFA brigades such as Wollert, Mernda, Yarrambat, Doreen, South Morang, Plenty and Epping have provided Fire Protection to the surrounding areas for many years.

These brigades were originally founded as Bushfire brigades. At the time, these brigades meet the needs of the community and the whole area (less than 10 years ago) was mostly farming land with large swathes of grasslands. Skip forward to 2017 and the areas covered by South Morang, Plenty, Doreen, Mernda, Epping are heavily urbanised with significant growth in medium and high-density housing. The areas covered by Yarrambat and Wollert are slowly starting to develop in a similar fashion.

The current management of these areas don't help in meeting the demands of a growing population. Typically the response management (assignment tables) in these areas is managed by a catchment officer (Operations Officer) and the Group Leadership committee (A Group is a collection of surrounding brigades that are grouped together for management purposes). They review submitted tables by the individual brigades and modify, support and approve them.

The principle is that the Captains of the brigades determine what neighbouring resources they need to deal with a particular incident i.e. grass fire – more tankers, structure fire – nearest Pumper. They then formulate their assignment tables, which outline which trucks from which brigade is called and in which particular order. To the common person, the nearest trucks would be called first. However, years of parochialism cultivated in the organisation has created many examples of a 'Hatfield and McCoys' type mentality.

Currently, there are brigades that will choose a brigade that is further away based on ego, petty parochialism. The term within the service that is commonly used for this type of behaviour is called 'protecting their sand piles' or 'protecting their empires'. Egos before community.

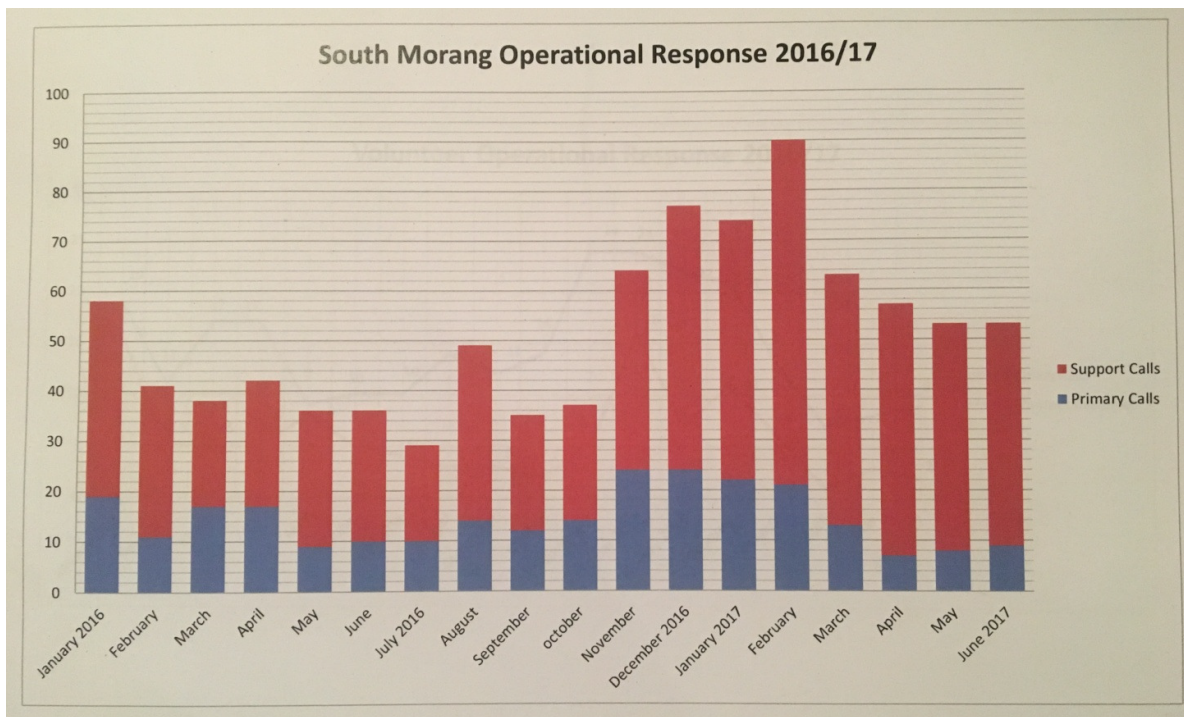
When Professional Fire Fighters started South Morang we had inherited assignment tables that precluded the brigade from supporting neighbouring brigades to particular types of calls.

As an industrialised work group, we had to campaign to be used more and therefore be busier and work harder. Just because we get 'paid' and we are unionised; it doesn't mean that we are not equally or more passionate about protecting the communities we work in that the volunteers. It took twelve months of campaigning to have us respond more often and further into neighbouring areas.

As you can see from the diagram below (*Diagram No1*) our call rates were relatively consistent due to assignment tables excluding the Professional Fire Fighters from responding to support neighbouring communities. The tables changed as of 1<sup>st</sup> November 2016; this included us responding to all our surrounding brigades for all 'Code 1' (life risk) calls.

As the diagram shows, we went from 35-40 calls a month up to 65 to 90 calls within three months. The Professional Fire Fighters at South Morang were busier helping the surrounding communities. This is exactly what Professional Fire Fighters like, busy operational tempo, helping as many people as possible.

Unfortunately this tempo was short lived. After a few months, a neighbouring brigade Captain (who fully supported the Professional Fire Fighters coming into his area) informed me that the Group had received complaints from surrounding Brigade Captains that they did not like the Professional Fire Fighters from South Morang from coming into 'THEIR' area. The Group raised the issue with the Catchment Officer. This Operations Officer had changes made that saw the Professional Fire Fighters withdrawn from responding to some calls in some areas. As seen from (*Diagram No1*) the quantified result is a difference of around 10 to 20 call less per month (April to June 2017)



*Diagram No1.*

This Catchment Officer has stated that where possible we have to 'give volunteers a go'. Thus why the assignment tables have been changed, to give volunteers a go, which puts the community at risk by denying the local community a guaranteed response.

Of those support call numbers identified in the diagram above, on average 60% of them are support calls into the neighbouring CFA volunteer areas. The rest is supporting the MFB. 60% of the time we are travelling up to 10 minutes to a neighbouring volunteer area. At least 50% of those calls we will be the first on scene in another brigade area. Having Professional Fire Fighters at South Morang provides guaranteed response to the areas around Epping, Wollert, Mernda, Doreen, Yarrambat and Plenty.

This is what the Fire Service Reform is hoping to achieve around the outer metropolitan area of Melbourne. Guaranteed response protecting the Victorian Community, Your constituents.

Examples of these assignment table changes that preclude Professional Fire Fighter response:

**Doreen Area 4: Structure Fire Code 1**

**Day response:**

South Morang second of three responded

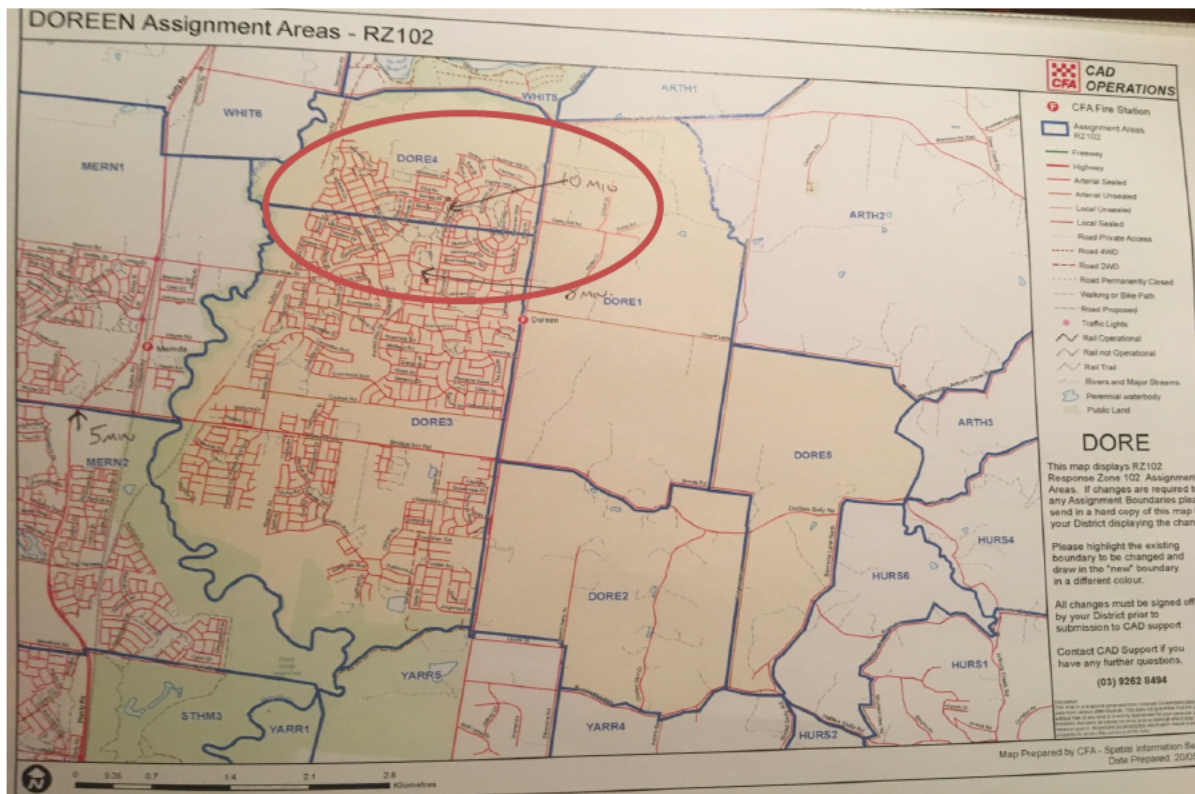
**Night response:**

South Morang fourth responded with three initially responded

**Weekend response:**

South Morang fourth responded with three initially responded

Note: South Morang responds into that area within 10 minutes on a regular occurrence  
Refer to the Doreen response area map and assignment tables below:



Note recorded travel times on various points drawn on map.

14\_Region\_Day

11131	DORE3	ALARC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
11132	DORE3	ALARC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
108568	DORE3	G&SC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
35776	DORE3	G&SC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
11135	DORE3	INCIC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
1118	DORE3	INCIC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
11137	DORE3	NOSTC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
1130	DORE3	NOSTC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
130821	DORE3	NS&RC1	DORE	14	CR	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
126628	DORE3	NS&RC3	DORE	14	BR	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
11139	DORE3	RESCC1	DORE	14	CR	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
1142	DORE3	RESCC3	DORE	14	BR	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
11141	DORE3	STRUC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
1154	DORE3	STRUC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
11143	DORE4	ALARC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	STHMS	MERN	WHIT	ARTH	YARR	STHM
11144	DORE4	ALARC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	STHMS	MERN	WHIT	ARTH	YARR	STHM
108569	DORE4	G&SC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	STHMS	MERN	WHIT	ARTH	YARR	STHM
105949	DORE4	G&SC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	STHMS	MERN	WHIT	ARTH	YARR	STHM
11147	DORE4	INCIC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	STHMS	MERN	WHIT	ARTH	YARR	STHM
45348	DORE4	INCIC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	STHMS	MERN	WHIT	ARTH	YARR	STHM
11149	DORE4	NOSTC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	STHMS	MERN	WHIT	ARTH	YARR	STHM
45360	DORE4	NOSTC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	STHMS	MERN	WHIT	ARTH	YARR	STHM
30823	DORE4	NS&RC1	DORE	14	BR	DORE	STHMS	MERN	WHIT	ARTH	YARR	STHM
28648	DORE4	NS&RC3	DORE	14	BR	DORE	STHMS	MERN	WHIT	ARTH	YARR	STHM
11151	DORE4	RESCC1	DORE	14	BR	DORE	STHMS	MERN	WHIT	ARTH	YARR	STHM
1108	DORE4	RESCC3	DORE	14	BR	DORE	STHMS	MERN	WHIT	ARTH	YARR	STHM
11153	DORE4	STRUC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	STHMS	MERN	WHIT	ARTH	YARR	STHM
1120	DORE4	STRUC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	STHMS	MERN	WHIT	ARTH	YARR	STHM

**Day time assignment tables.** South Morang (STHMS) is listed second on a C Response (Three brigades) for a Code 1 Structure Fire (Life Risk)

14\_Region\_Night

11705	DORE3	ALARC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
53131	DORE3	ALARC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
11707	DORE3	G&SC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
62656	DORE3	G&SC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
11709	DORE3	INCIC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
53125	DORE3	INCIC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
11711	DORE3	NOSTC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
53121	DORE3	NOSTC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
82192	DORE3	NS&RC1	DORE	14	CR	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
83817	DORE3	NS&RC3	DORE	14	BR	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
11713	DORE3	RESCC1	DORE	14	CR	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
53143	DORE3	RESCC3	DORE	14	BR	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
11715	DORE3	STRUC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
53141	DORE3	STRUC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
11717	DORE4	ALARC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
55773	DORE4	ALARC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
11719	DORE4	G&SC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
3030	DORE4	G&SC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
11721	DORE4	INCIC1	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
55779	DORE4	INCIC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
11723	DORE4	NOSTC1	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
55777	DORE4	NOSTC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
82194	DORE4	NS&RC1	DORE	14	BR	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
81411	DORE4	NS&RC3	DORE	14	BR	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
11725	DORE4	RESCC1	DORE	14	BR	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
55783	DORE4	RESCC3	DORE	14	BR	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
11727	DORE4	STRUC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
55781	DORE4	STRUC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM

**Night time assignment tables.** South Morang (STHMS) is listed fourth on a C Response (Three brigades) for a Code 1 Structure Fire (Life Risk). Greater risk at night time.

As noted on the map for the 10 minute mark, it is 11 km from South Morang Fire Station with a 90 second response and from Whittlesea (Whit) Fire Station to the same point is 12 km with a 4 to 6 minute response time. Does that make sense?

14_Region_Weekend												
25873	DORE3	ALARC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
21882	DORE3	ALARC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
25876	DORE3	G&SC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
84386	DORE3	G&SC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
25877	DORE3	INCIC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
21884	DORE3	INCIC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
25879	DORE3	NOSTC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
22101	DORE3	NOSTC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
83413	DORE3	NS&RC1	DORE	14	CR	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
84368	DORE3	NS&RC3	DORE	14	BR	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
25881	DORE3	RESCC1	DORE	14	CR	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
21890	DORE3	RESCC3	DORE	14	BR	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
25883	DORE3	STRUC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
21880	DORE3	STRUC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	STHMS	YARR	WHIT	STHM	HURS
25885	DORE4	ALARC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
54521	DORE4	ALARC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
25887	DORE4	G&SC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
87162	DORE4	G&SC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
25889	DORE4	INCIC1	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
54569	DORE4	INCIC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
25891	DORE4	NOSTC1	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
65678	DORE4	NOSTC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
83415	DORE4	NS&RC1	DORE	14	BR	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
87164	DORE4	NS&RC3	DORE	14	BR	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
25893	DORE4	RESCC1	DORE	14	BR	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
65676	DORE4	RESCC3	DORE	14	BR	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
25895	DORE4	STRUC1	DORE	14	C	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM
65672	DORE4	STRUC3	DORE	14	B	DORE	MERN	WHIT	STHMS	ARTH	YARR	STHM

**Weekend assignment tables.** South Morang (STHMS) is listed fourth on a C Response (Three brigades) for a Code 1 Structure Fire (Life Risk).

As noted on the map for the 10 minute mark, it is 11 km from South Morang Fire Station with a 90 second response and from Whittlesea (Whit) Fire Station to the same point is 12 km with a 4 to 6 minute response time. Does that make sense?

**Mernda Area 3: Rescue Code 1**

**Day response:**

South Morang second brigade of three brigades responded

**Night response:**

South Morang second brigade of two brigades responded

**Weekend response:**

South Morang third brigade responded with two brigades initially responded

**Mernda Area 4: Rescue Code 1**

**Day response:**

South Morang second brigade of two brigades responded

**Night response:**

South Morang second brigade of two brigades responded

**Weekend response:**

South Morang fourth responded with two initially responded

**Mernda Area 4: Structure Fire Code 1**

**Day response:**

South Morang second brigade of three brigades responded

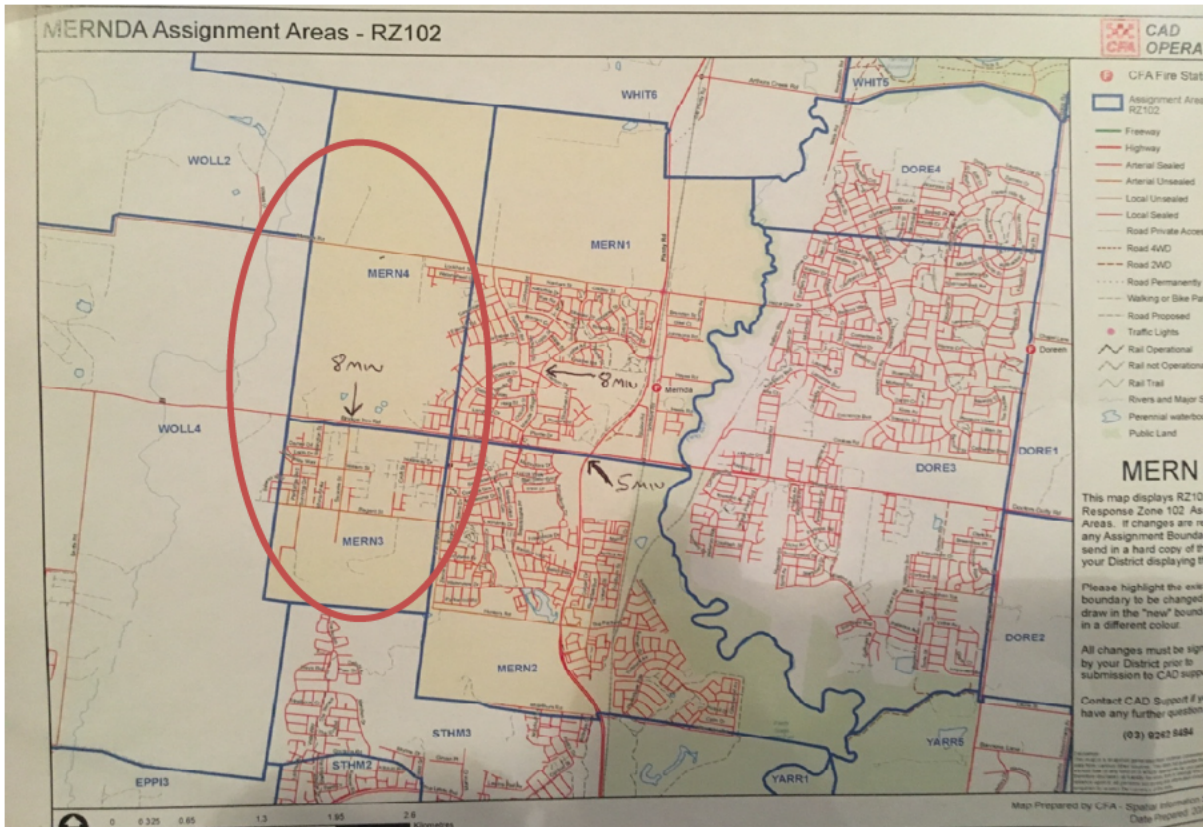
**Night response:**

South Morang second brigade of three brigades responded

**Weekend response:**

South Morang fourth brigade responded with three brigades initially responded

Refer to the Mernda response area map and assignment tables below:



Note recorded travel times on various points drawn on map.

14\_Region\_Day

24440	MERN3	ALARC1	MERN	14	C	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
24441	MERN3	ALARC3	MERN	14	C	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
109921	MERN3	G&SC1	MERN	14	C	MERN	WOLL	STHMS	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
46784	MERN3	G&SC3	MERN	14	C	MERN	WOLL	STHMS	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
24444	MERN3	INCIC1	MERN	14	C	MERN	WOLL	STHMS	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
6203	MERN3	INCIC3	MERN	14	C	MERN	WOLL	STHMS	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
24446	MERN3	NOSTC1	MERN	14	C	MERN	WOLL	STHMS	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
48755	MERN3	NOSTC3	MERN	14	C	MERN	WOLL	STHMS	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
134382	MERN3	NS&RC1	MERN	14	CR	MERN	WOLL	STHMS	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
130458	MERN3	NS&RC3	MERN	14	CR	MERN	WOLL	STHMS	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
24448	MERN3	RESCC1	MERN	14	CR	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
116668	MERN3	RESCC3	MERN	14	CR	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
24450	MERN3	STRUC1	MERN	14	C	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
48767	MERN3	STRUC3	MERN	14	C	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
138440	MERN4	ALARC1	MERN	14	C	MERN	STHM	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	YARR	
138441	MERN4	ALARC3	MERN	14	B	MERN	STHM	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	YARR	
138442	MERN4	G&SC1	MERN	14	B	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	WHIT	STHM	DORE	YARR
138443	MERN4	G&SC3	MERN	14	B	MERN	WOLL	STHMS	WHIT	STHM	DORE	YARR
138444	MERN4	INCIC1	MERN	14	B	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	WHIT	STHM	DORE	YARR
138445	MERN4	INCIC3	MERN	14	B	MERN	WOLL	STHMS	WHIT	STHM	DORE	YARR
138446	MERN4	NOSTC1	MERN	14	B	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	WHIT	STHM	DORE	YARR
138447	MERN4	NOSTC3	MERN	14	B	MERN	WOLL	STHMS	WHIT	STHM	DORE	YARR
138448	MERN4	NS&RC1	MERN	14	BR	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	WHIT	STHM	DORE	YARR
138449	MERN4	NS&RC3	MERN	14	BR	MERN	WOLL	STHMS	WHIT	STHM	DORE	YARR
138450	MERN4	RESCC1	MERN	14	BR	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	WHIT	STHM	DORE	YARR
138451	MERN4	RESCC3	MERN	14	BR	MERN	WOLL	STHMS	WHIT	STHM	DORE	YARR
138452	MERN4	STRUC1	MERN	14	C	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	WHIT	STHM	DORE	YARR
138453	MERN4	STRUC3	MERN	14	B	MERN	WOLL	STHMS	WHIT	STHM	DORE	YARR

**Daytime assignment tables.** South Morang (STHMS) is listed second on a B Response (Two brigades) for a Code 1 Rescue and C Response (Three brigades) for a Code 1 Structure Fire (Life Risk)

14_Region_Night												
26423	MERN3	ALARC1	MERN	14	C	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
70112	MERN3	ALARC3	MERN	14	B	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
26425	MERN3	G&SC1	MERN	14	C	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
24199	MERN3	G&SC3	MERN	14	B	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
26427	MERN3	INCIC1	MERN	14	B	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
54387	MERN3	INCIC3	MERN	14	B	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
26429	MERN3	NOSTC1	MERN	14	B	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
54381	MERN3	NOSTC3	MERN	14	B	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
84968	MERN3	NS&RC1	MERN	14	BR	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
87875	MERN3	NS&RC3	MERN	14	BR	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
26431	MERN3	RESCC1	MERN	14	BR	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
54389	MERN3	RESCC3	MERN	14	BR	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
26433	MERN3	STRUC1	MERN	14	C	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
70104	MERN3	STRUC3	MERN	14	B	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
52598	MERN4	ALARC1	MERN	14	C	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
70108	MERN4	ALARC3	MERN	14	B	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
52600	MERN4	G&SC1	MERN	14	C	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
26029	MERN4	G&SC3	MERN	14	B	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
52602	MERN4	INCIC1	MERN	14	B	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
70114	MERN4	INCIC3	MERN	14	B	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
52604	MERN4	NOSTC1	MERN	14	B	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
54397	MERN4	NOSTC3	MERN	14	B	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
84970	MERN4	NS&RC1	MERN	14	BR	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
86417	MERN4	NS&RC3	MERN	14	BR	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
52606	MERN4	RESCC1	MERN	14	BR	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
70110	MERN4	RESCC3	MERN	14	BR	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
52608	MERN4	STRUC1	MERN	14	C	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR
54401	MERN4	STRUC3	MERN	14	B	MERN	STHMS	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	STHM	YARR

**Night time assignment tables.** South Morang (STHMS) is listed second on a B Response (Two brigades) for a Code 1 Rescue and C Response (Three brigades) for a Code 1 Structure Fire (Life Risk)

14_Region_Weekend											
26701	MERN3	ALARC1	MERN	14	B	MERN	STHM	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	YARR
28062	MERN3	ALARC3	MERN	14	B	MERN	STHM	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	YARR
26703	MERN3	G&SC1	MERN	14	B	MERN	WOLL	STHM	DORE	WHIT	YARR
13839	MERN3	G&SC3	MERN	14	B	MERN	WOLL	STHM	DORE	WHIT	YARR
26705	MERN3	INCIC1	MERN	14	C	MERN	WOLL	STHM	DORE	WHIT	YARR
28054	MERN3	INCIC3	MERN	14	B	MERN	WOLL	STHM	DORE	WHIT	YARR
26707	MERN3	NOSTC1	MERN	14	B	MERN	WOLL	STHM	DORE	WHIT	YARR
28056	MERN3	NOSTC3	MERN	14	B	MERN	WOLL	STHM	DORE	WHIT	YARR
86189	MERN3	NS&RC1	MERN	14	BR	MERN	WOLL	STHM	DORE	WHIT	YARR
13851	MERN3	NS&RC3	MERN	14	BR	MERN	WOLL	STHM	DORE	WHIT	YARR
26709	MERN3	RESCC1	MERN	14	BR	MERN	WOLL	STHM	DORE	WHIT	YARR
28058	MERN3	RESCC3	MERN	14	BR	MERN	WOLL	STHM	DORE	WHIT	YARR
26711	MERN3	STRUC1	MERN	14	C	MERN	STHM	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	YARR
28028	MERN3	STRUC3	MERN	14	B	MERN	STHM	WOLL	DORE	WHIT	YARR
52729	MERN4	ALARC1	MERN	14	B	MERN	WOLL	DORE	STHM	WHIT	YARR
27058	MERN4	ALARC3	MERN	14	B	MERN	WOLL	DORE	STHM	WHIT	YARR
52731	MERN4	G&SC1	MERN	14	B	MERN	WOLL	DORE	STHM	WHIT	YARR
13863	MERN4	G&SC3	MERN	14	B	MERN	WOLL	DORE	STHM	WHIT	YARR
52733	MERN4	INCIC1	MERN	14	B	MERN	WOLL	DORE	STHM	WHIT	YARR
27060	MERN4	INCIC3	MERN	14	B	MERN	WOLL	DORE	STHM	WHIT	YARR
52735	MERN4	NOSTC1	MERN	14	B	MERN	WOLL	DORE	STHM	WHIT	YARR
69242	MERN4	NOSTC3	MERN	14	B	MERN	WOLL	DORE	STHM	WHIT	YARR
86191	MERN4	NS&RC1	MERN	14	BR	MERN	WOLL	DORE	STHM	WHIT	YARR
13875	MERN4	NS&RC3	MERN	14	BR	MERN	WOLL	DORE	STHM	WHIT	YARR
52737	MERN4	RESCC1	MERN	14	BR	MERN	WOLL	DORE	STHM	WHIT	YARR
27056	MERN4	RESCC3	MERN	14	BR	MERN	WOLL	DORE	STHM	WHIT	YARR
52739	MERN4	STRUC1	MERN	14	C	MERN	DORE	WOLL	STHM	WHIT	YARR
27066	MERN4	STRUC3	MERN	14	B	MERN	DORE	WOLL	STHM	WHIT	YARR

**Weekend assignment tables.** South Morang (STHMS) is listed fourth on a B Response (Two brigades) for a Code 1 Rescue and C Response (Three brigades) for a Code 1 Structure Fire (Life Risk).



None of the brigades responding to the rescue call have any forcible entry equipment, rescue training or advanced first aid training and equipment like Emergency Medical Response (EMR). This parochialism is repeated around most of the 35 integrated stations in the state. Parochialism first, community welfare second.

The volunteers in this area are generally good people and will do anything for their communities; however, they do not have the scope of training and skills of the crew of four from South Morang.

Credit to the Captain and senior leadership at Mernda, from day one, they have openly supported the assistance of Professional Fire Fighters from South Morang. In fact the Mernda Captains written request for the EMR trial to cover his community greatly assisted counter acting the request not to have Professional Fire Fighters from South Morang extending their coverage for EMR response from other neighbouring brigade Captains.

Due to the areas around Wollert, Mernda, Epping, Doreen, Yarrambat, Plenty being dormitory suburbs, many volunteers work outside the area and cannot respond with great frequency. This does not result in the local brigades being able to guarantee a full crew nor a crew with all the training and skill set to deal with the incidents they respond to, despite their best intentions.

A guaranteed 90-second response out the door with a five to eight minute travel time by a Heavy Pumper with Professionally trained crew of four are either withheld from responding or handicapped in their response by six minutes after one of the other three brigades fail to respond.

I'm sure most of your constituents like myself, appreciate volunteers and what they do; but for most people that appreciation wouldn't extend past reducing response capability just 'to give them a go'?

Along with everyday type responses, South Morang Professional Fire Fighters are utilised for a 10 minute radial response for Emergency Medical Response (EMR) in the South Morang, Mill Park, Epping, Wollert, Mernda, Doreen, Yarrambat and Plenty areas.

South Morang had been undertaking EMR response with the volunteers prior to integration. Once integration occurred, both the volunteers and Professional Fire Fighters provide EMR response. Similar situation occurs at Mornington Brigade.

During the early months of integration where we were on 'day manning' Monday to Friday from June 1 2015 until November 1 2015, the on duty crew did not respond to EMR calls.

During the day manning period, there were 16 EMR calls for the brigade. Unfortunately the volunteers were only able to respond to 8 of those calls. Given the four to eight minute delay in responding, they were often cancelled before arriving on scene.

The Professional Fire Fighters began EMR response as of November 1, 2015 when the station began 24/7 manning. Since undertaking EMR response, the demand has increased. Feedback from Paramedics from the nearby AV locations have been very appreciative of the assistance and support we provide their crews at Priority 0 call (Unconscious, non breathing conditions)

Undertaking the extended 10 minute radial response program Professional Fire Fighters have almost doubled their EMR responses. (Refer to Diagram No.2)

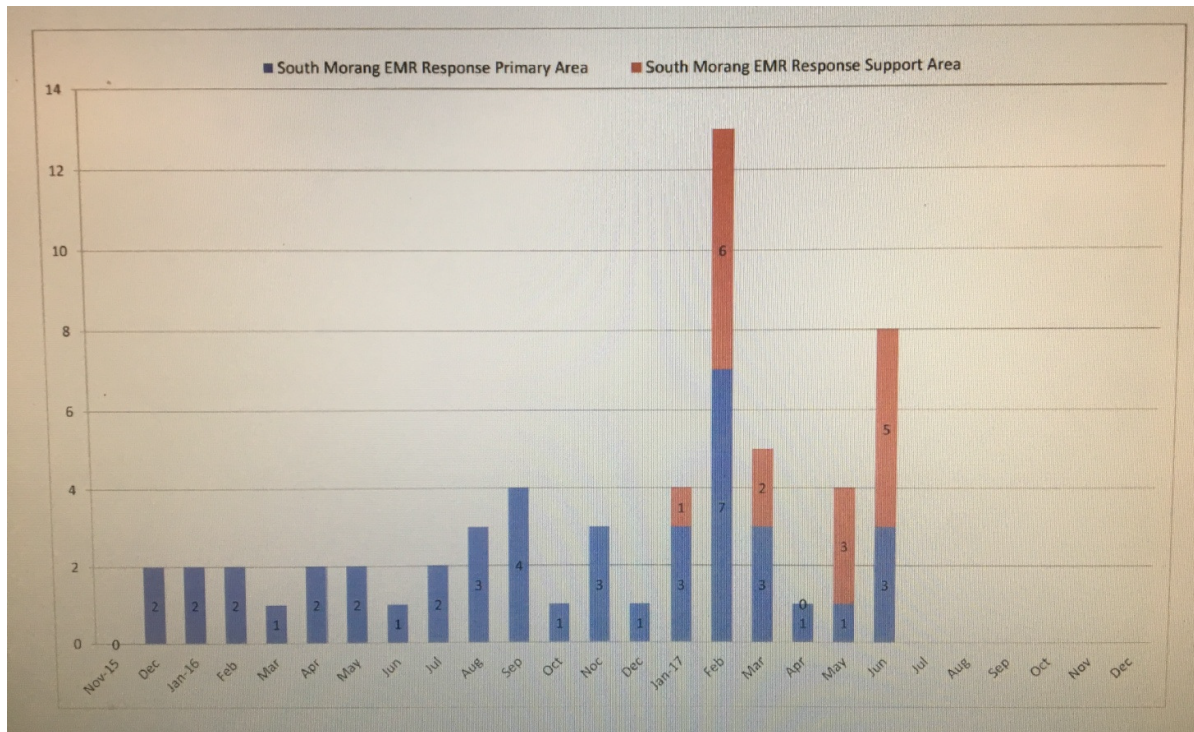


Diagram No. 2

Since January 2017 the Professional Fire Fighters of South Morang have been responding within a 10 minute radial response area for EMR calls.

This diagram demonstrates the tangible benefit of having Professional Fire Fighters deployed within a 10 minute radial search. This is the bang for your buck your Fire Service Levy paying constituents get from utilising the Professional Fire Fighters they are already paying for.

Unfortunately the area South Morang Professional Fire Fighters covered for EMR response isn't matched for other life threatening incidents such as Motor vehicle accidents, House fires, Hazmat incidents and other technical rescue situations. Parochialism dictates level of protection and response in outer metropolitan Melbourne.

Sadly this benefit to the communities surrounding South Morang almost did not occur. Neighbouring brigades complained to the catchment Officer that they didn't want the Professional Fire Fighters to extend their EMR coverage into their areas. Most believed that they should undertake the EMR training and respond instead. Fortunately common sense prevailed and South Morang was put back on the radial search program.

Under the Proposed Fire Service Reform, the above listed examples and processes will be outdated. Under the reform, internationally recognised dispatch systems will be utilised. This will mean GPS, navigation systems like G.I.S will be utilised to determine the best and quickest appliances (in relation to location, response and travel time) are responded to an incident. No more parochial influenced decisions.

It will mean the Professional Fire Fighters of Fire Rescue Victoria, will travel further and respond more often. The Victorian community are paying for them through the Fire Service Levy, we are happy to be made to work harder for our money. The Victorian community, your constituents, are getting better bang for their buck and fire service delivery is improved, resulting in potentially more Victorians be saved and a reduction in monetary cost associated with fire damage throughout Victoria.

Broadening their skill set with further rescue skills will add value and increase survivability at motor vehicle accidents (MVA) around the state. Professional Fire Fighter are responded to MVAs all the time. Often they have to wait 10, 20 up to 30 minutes for a volunteer rescue response. This seriously reduces the 'Golden Hour' trauma doctors rely on to maximise the survivability of a MVA victim. Just like EMR, the community are paying for us to be there, make us work.

From the local volunteer's perspective, the local volunteer (who may be a wildfire crew leader not a structural crew leader) who is going to a house fire at 3 am on a Wednesday morning will have the peace of mind knowing that they have guaranteed support from the nearby Professional Fire Fighters. They will have peace of mind even if their neighbouring brigade are slow or fail to respond which will allow them to focus on the task at hand.

For Officers like myself, the reform will also provide me with peace of mind knowing that I will have guaranteed support to back my crew up regardless of the neighbouring volunteers failing to respond due to work / life commitments.

For example, the volunteers in our brigade only respond to calls within our brigade area unless paged to respond to a support area. (*Refer to Diagram No 3.*)

On average the brigade, get responded 16 times a month in their local area. On average, the volunteers manage to respond 8 times per month. As you can see from the diagram, it's often less than that.

That means from my perspective as an Officer I do not have guaranteed support for my crew in our local area. This statistic is reflected at the majority of the 35 integrated stations around the state.

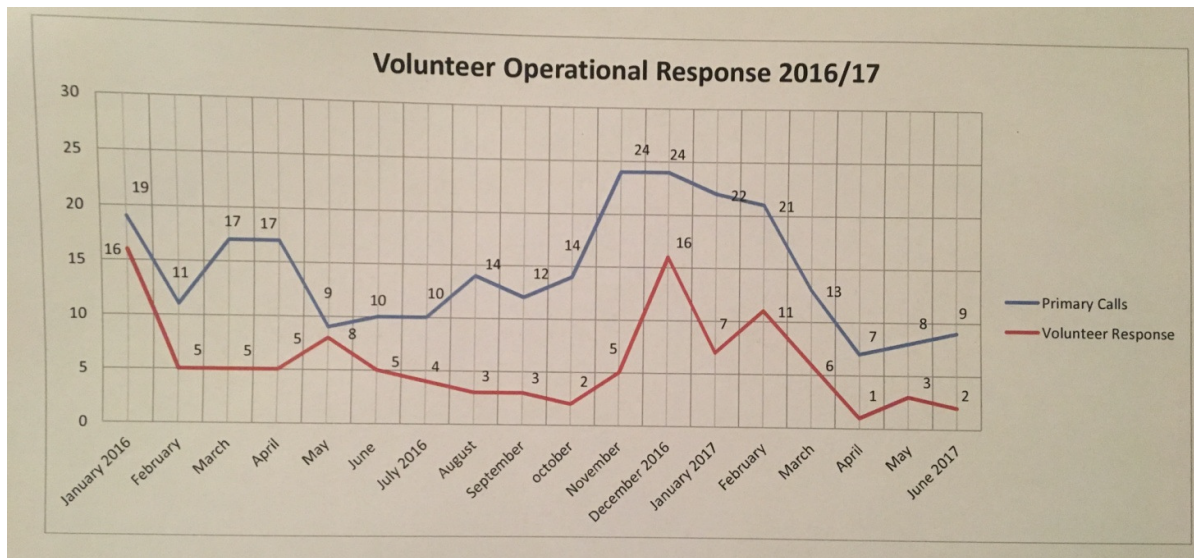


Diagram No 3.

Under the reform, my fellow Officers and I at South Morang and most of the 35 other integrated stations will have peace of mind knowing the closest Fire Rescue Victoria appliance will be responded to support us (subject to G.I.S response evaluation i.e. the nearest FRV appliance is within a 12 minutes radial response) as well as the nearest Volunteer brigade.

Improved safety for all Victorian Fire Fighters (Both Professional and Volunteer) directly correlates to improved safety for the Victorian community, your constituents.

**Effect of volunteer engagement and participation in fire service delivery**

The proposed Fire Service reform will provide the volunteers something the more vocal ones have been seeking for some time, a volunteer only CFA. Is this a good thing? Yes I believe it is as it frees volunteers from being involved in three way negotiations and industrial negotiations. It frees them up to focus on proving a quality service to their fellow Victorians. They can propose changes that benefit volunteers i.e. training opportunities, infrastructure and operational equipment development to suit them.

Secondly the CFA Act will be changed to reflect this change and enshrined in State Legislation thus protecting the organisation.

In the outer metropolitan areas, the creation of Fire Rescue Victoria and the proposed international standard radial search response they will be responded by can potentially alleviate the ever-increasing heavy burden of operational response on a daily basis away from the volunteers.

I personally know many volunteers that stifle their own professional careers to ensure they respond to as many fire calls as they can. They give up their time for the community, that should be enough without sacrificing their personal and work lives too.

Some volunteers are concerned about how things will operate between FRV and CFA on the fire ground. Personally, I see no difference other than fire trucks and uniforms having two types of badges. As per current Operating procedures, the first trucks crew leader will run the job until the local truck arrives and when appropriate; the control of the incident will be given back to the local crew leader. It happens now and despite some logo and name changes, it should remain the same. End of the day the Fire Fighters, both Professional and Volunteer will work side by side to protect the community.

Some people have raised concern about the 'surge capacity' being diminished in the outer metropolitan areas. The volunteers at the 35 current integrated stations will remain where they are and still carry out their current roles of training and responding to fire calls when they can. With the proposed changes around FRV having mutual support from nearby FRV stations, the pressure and expectation for the volunteers to respond is less. This will allow the volunteers to focus on their own careers and families and perhaps focus on developing their skills as fire fighters, crew leaders, strike team leaders, sector commanders etc. for the times where the surge capacity is required; during campaign bushfires.

The majority of outer metropolitan volunteers work away from their brigade areas, making it difficult to frequently respond to ever increasing outer metropolitan fire calls. This can cause significant stress to someone who is compelled to help their community, the desire to respond vs the need to work and meet their employer's needs and expectations can lead to significant frustration. Sometimes this leads to volunteers leaving the brigade or they do not grow and develop in their chosen profession as they are trying to meet the needs of two masters; profession and volunteering.

A little dark secret that is known at most of the 35 integrated stations around the state is that the 'surge' capacity has been diminishing for many years. In the district I am based in, I am aware of two Groups that during the fire season struggle to provide a strike teams on any given day (outside of the holiday period). That is almost half the districts surge capacity.

On any given day during the fire danger period and as was proven last fire season on the few total Fire Ban days we had, the two groups struggled to crew their strike teams (One control vehicle with a minimum of three people and five trucks with a minimum of four crew, that's five vehicles and a minimum of 23 people).

These strike teams are expected to deploy for up to five days. Both Groups would not have been able to provide relief crews to replace the original crews if needed.

This is a common occurrence around the state each year. At short notice (less than 48 hours) more and more Groups around the state struggle to supply a full strike team let alone a replacement team. Strike teams planned out with five days or more notice can usually be filled reasonably well. As volunteers take leave or time in lieu to accommodate their employer.

If you look back at CFAs own statistics for the 2008/2009 fires (Black Saturday) season; of the 58,000 volunteers in the organisation, only around 18,000 were recorded as working directly or providing support at the fires during the month of February to March. CFA figures state around 36,000 volunteers are operational at that time. So only half the volunteers were available during the worse fire season Victoria had had in decades.

This diminished 'surge capacity' is the reflection of work / life demands that have been affecting volunteerism for the last decade. It is a reflection on the demands of today on volunteers, not the good work of the volunteers.

### ***Short term and long term cost impact on fire service provision***

Under the proposed Fire Service reform, Professional Fire Fighters that form the FRV will be responded based upon GPS/ mapping data that will create a mapping overlay of an international standard 10 minute radial response. This will mean the Professional Fire Fighters, who are already payed, will be responding more often, and therefore working more for their income. I think that can be considered a cost saving. Under this system, individual appliances will be responded i.e. to a car fire two trucks will be responded. This is what currently occurs in the metropolitan Fire District. This is cost affective compared to what occurs in the outer metropolitan areas of Melbourne.

Currently in outer metropolitan Melbourne areas, a brigade will be responded to a car fire, sometimes two brigades. I have witnessed myself at a car fire where the Professional Fire Fighters responded in one appliance and within 10 minutes three more appliances and two for wheel drives responded. In total there were 3 Professional fire fighters and 13 volunteers with six vehicles. A car fire only requires two appliances not six. That is a lot of cost in relation to fuel and wear and tear on vehicles.

Rational response arrangements under the Fire Service Reform can provide operational cost savings / effectiveness.

Streamlining / standardising training for Professional Fire Fighters and Volunteers will improve training costs long term. In turn this will open up more volunteer focused training opportunities.

In the outer metropolitan areas, having FRV respond further (radial response) will lessen the demands on volunteers to respond to every call. The flow on effect this has is the reduction in lost productivity time for the volunteers employer; less productivity loss means increased profitability; which means business growth and development; which can lead to further employment and positive influence in the Victorian economy.

There will be some short-term cost associated with re-branding of stations / appliances, equipment and clothing and the development of policies, procedures, Memorandum of Understandings etc. These are mostly one off costs that are far outweighed by improved service deliver to the Victorian communities which will result in increased survivability of individuals, reduction in the scale of destruction, separation of work groups will lead to better interoperability, less industrial unrest and a more cost effective Fire Service for Victorians.

### ***Underlying policy rationale***

The current fire service system does not meet the needs of today's society. There are many failings in the system that are hidden within it. These failings jeopardise Victorian people, their properties and the Fire Fighters who protect them.

The Fire service system was established in the 50's. Mindsets and fire service boundaries haven't been revised or updated in that time. The service isn't being progressive and proactive in meeting the demands and needs of the Victorian communities its chartered to protect. Prime example of this is the flammable cladding that lines numerous buildings around Melbourne CBD and suburbs. The Fire services and the government are reacting to trouble rather than proactively dealing with potential trouble.

In the outer metropolitan areas of Melbourne , which are labelled as 'Country Victoria', the Fire Service has trucks designed to fight grass fires attempt to protect medium and high density multi storey housing which have significant life risk. These areas have response criteria that allow six to eight minutes for a fire truck to respond. Life risk in these area dictate that that type of response is unacceptable and does not meet the expectations of the Victorian Community.

The Fire Service reform will create an independent body that regularly evaluates the urban growth and needs of an ever-growing Victorian Community and recommend changes to meet those needs.

I personally thank you for your time and your service to this Select Committee. I hope you see through the feedback you have received that this Fire Service Reform is warranted and just. This committee need to meet the needs of the Victorian Community, not their own parties self interests.

I encourage and challenge you to make the brave decision to move the Victorian Fire Service into the future and in line with every other state in Australia. Make the choice to provide Victorian with a separate Professional and Volunteer Fire Service. Allow both of them to do what they do best; to protect all Victorians.

Do your part to protect the protectors and support the presumptive legislation to ensure security and peace of mind for all Victorian Fire Fighters.

As Fire Fighters we all have the Victorian Communities back, do the Victorian Politicians have our backs?

Sincerely,

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