

From: [REDACTED]
 To: [LCSC; "consultation@dpr.vic.gov.au"](mailto:LCSC;)
 Cc: [REDACTED]
 Subject: Submission to Fire Services Bill Select Committee
 Date: Friday, 7 July 2017 4:58:23 PM

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees,

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

I am [REDACTED],

- **Acting Station Officer** at [REDACTED] Fire Station
- Employed as a Professional Firefighter with the Metropolitan Fire Brigade (MFB) for 10 years
- Certificate II, III and IV in Public Safety (Firefighting, Emergency Operations and Firefighting Supervision)
- Leading Firefighter
- Hazmat Technician
- Long Duration Breathing Apparatus Operator
- Breathing apparatus Service Operator
- Shipboard Firefighter
- Transporter Operator

I am also a **Volunteer Firefighter** with the [REDACTED] CFA Fire Brigade

- With 15 years service since 2002
- Structural qualified Firefighter
- Wildfire Qualified Firefighter
- Chainsaw Operator
- Recipient of the [REDACTED] Fire Brigade "Firefighter of the Year" 2004
- Elected Training Officer in 2006
- Selected to participate in CFA Challenge Leadership Program 2007
- Recipient of 10 year Long Service medal
- Recipient of [REDACTED] Fire Brigade "Fundraiser of the Year" 2015

As a **Professional Firefighter** I am writing this submission **in support of the proposed reform of the fire services** for the following reasons:

- There has been NO significant reform to the fire services since 1958 and this modernization is long overdue
- The boundaries of the Metropolitan Fire District (MFD), jurisdiction of the fully professional fire service, have not changed since 1958
- In fact when the MFB was created in 1891 the boundary was set as a 10 mile radius from Melbourne, the 1958 boundary does not go much further.
- 60% of Greater Melbourne now lies beyond the MFD Boundary and is the jurisdiction of the largely volunteer Country Fire Authority (CFA)
- 60% of Melbourne's Industry is in the CFA's jurisdiction, again dependant on a largely volunteer firefighting service. Politicization
- These areas of greater Melbourne and our large Regional centres (where

35 CFA Integrated Stations are located) are now highly urbanised and densely populated

- This increased urbanisation necessitates a fully professional fire service where two fire trucks are despatched with at least 7 (preferably 8) highly trained firefighters are at the scene of a fire/incident in under 8 minutes.
- This response provides for the best community protection and firefighter safety.
- This means the highest trained firefighters are guaranteed to be despatched in 90 seconds
- The first arriving fire truck provides for a Station Officer to manage strategy and oversee the safety of the public/firefighters, Driver/Pump Operator to ensure water supply and then a team of 2 firefighters to execute the rescue.
- The next due fire truck could provide 2 further teams of firefighters for rescue or further supervision, assistance with supply of water and a single team for rescue of the public or the initial firefighting team.
- Currently, in the CFA areas of greater Melbourne the primary responding fire truck will most probably be manned by volunteer firefighters.
- The baseline for the qualifications of a Volunteer firefighter is very low by comparison to that of a Professional Firefighter
- These volunteer firefighters may have as little as 27 hours of training (Minimum Skills), may not be qualified to drive under emergency conditions (lights and sirens) and may not be qualified to fight a structural fire wearing Breathing Apparatus

As I with the **CFA Volunteer Firefighter** I can assure you that:

- The role of these volunteer firefighters will not change, they will still respond as they have always done
- The role of Volunteer Firefighters to meet surge capacity at major incidents will not change.
- The division that has been created by the politicization of the fire services has caused tremendous and irreconcilable damage to relations between some Volunteer and Professional Firefighters
- The separation of professional and Volunteer firefighters into two services will provide stability and an ongoing mechanism for review.
- The membership of the [REDACTED] CFA Fire brigade have no concerns about the proposed changes, as they know that they will be unaffected.
- The proposed financial assistance within the Reforms to provide additional training is greatly needed by the CFA Volunteers

As a Professional and Volunteer Firefighter spanning 15 years with regular exposure to the carcinogenic toxins of fire smoke and other chemicals the introduction of Presumptive Legislation comes as great comfort to me and my family. As a result of these exposures I know that there is a significantly increased likelihood of my contracting one of these occupational cancers and while this is a sacrifice I am prepared to make for my service, at least my family will be spared the financial burden of my treatment.

Thank you for considering my submission

Kind regards

[REDACTED] | **Acting Station Officer** |
[REDACTED] **Fire Station** | D Platoon
Metropolitan Fire Brigade | [REDACTED] |
[REDACTED]

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