

Assistant Clerk Committees  
Department of the Legislative Council  
Fire Services Bill Select Committee Parliament House,  
Spring Street  
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 3002

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees

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

1. I am Peter Novotny

- CFA Operations Manager District 4,
- 11 years of service to CFA, with previous 32 years of fire management service to the Victorian community via Victorian Government agencies including (but not limited to) the Forests Commission Victoria, Department of Environment and Parks Victoria,
- I hold multiple fire accreditations including Level 3 Incident Controller, Regional Controller, Bachelor Forest Science and Diploma Forestry,
- I have been commended for fire service within Victoria, interstate and was the first Incident Controller representing Victoria to be appointed to support emergency services in the USA (2001).

2. I live in Portland and work in CFA's District 4 (Glenelg Shire).

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

- Something has to change to address the significant damage that the workplace disputation has had for far too long and without resolution. This has imposed considerable strain on both myself and other individuals in the workplace, and which translates to home life. The proposed reform appears to provide a solution to move ahead and to provide an environment in which increased focus can be provided to improving community safety.
- Throughout my fire career within the Victorian Government sector I have seen several organisation restructures, in particular I refer to those in 1980's under the Cain Government, and those under the Kennett Government in the mid 1990's. At the start of these changes, I was apprehensive of the unknown, but found that the changes were necessary, and that the issues giving rise to these changes would not have resolved themselves otherwise. The changing environment following the commencement of reform provided the opportunity to address and align the workplace structure, personnel, culture and other factors with what was needed to be successful into the future. Whilst there were many unknown details when proceeding down this path, my organisation had good personnel who identified these details and readily resolved them. I am confident that we have good personnel that would be

able to progress the details of the proposed changes now, and we would end up better able to serve the community than in the current unworkable arrangement.

- Whilst I recognise that there are a small number of local volunteer opponents to changes within CFA, my assessment is that they represent less than 1% of volunteer membership, and that if their treats to leave the organisation eventuate, this will not disadvantage the organisation's ability to provide for community safety. There are many good volunteers who are ready to replace them should this occur, and who would provide positive and capable leadership to adapt to our communities future needs.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Novotny

