

Inquiry into Fire services legislation amendment (reform) bill 2017

I wish my name and details to remain confidential

I live in Endeavour hills and work at box hill fire station as a Senior Station Officer for the Metropolitan Fire Brigade. I have completed 39 years of service for the M.F.B. I am writing this submission in support of reform of the fire services for the following reasons

- As a firefighter it is important to have guaranteed backup on the fireground , two trucks 7 Firefighters within 8 minutes
- This response ensures better safety and protection for the community
- Employing all career firefighters in one fire service will not affect volunteer turnout or surge capacity
- Volunteer support will be maintained with operational firefighters
- The reform areas are now highly urbanised living in Endeavour hills in now takes me twice as long a journey by car as it did 30 years ago because of population increase
- The reform will standardise training and equipment which I believe should be country wide as task forces have been used interstate.

In my experience

I have attended fires with bordering Volunteer stations to witness 1 individual trying to fight a house fire on the upper floor of a domestic property alone while 6 or 7 others without breathing apparatus watched on or fought from outside this is opposite to what we are taught to work in pairs for safety

I have been on an 16 hour task force the Sunday night after black Saturday waiting to be allocated a task while other volunteer task forces were employed on 2 or 3 different tasks because the allocation officer (a volunteer) did not find anything for us at Whittlesea for 10 hours. We then proceeded to Healesville and worked there for a total of two hours

(20 years earlier on ash Wednesday I was also 1 of the crew of 10 M.F.B appliances that waited for an invitation to assist that never eventuated.)

I also attended the fire at Hazelwood power plant open cut mine where Fire services attended from interstate including Queensland ,Nsw. South Australia and others but very little attendance from volunteer brigades in Victoria.

It is time to pass the presumptive rights compensation as well My Father a 26 year career Firefighter contracted lung cancer and with great expense and treatment survived another 14 years although it had also spread to his abdomen..After my service I pray that I do not contract this disease and it would be nice if I am looked after as I have served those of the community.

Yours sincerely

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Senior Station Officer

Metropolitan Fire Brigade