

Attention the Fire Services Bill Select Committee.

Dear Committee Members,

I take this opportunity to raise some of my concerns about the Fire Services Legislation which the Victorian Government is trying to push through the Lower House the Legislative Council.

I am a proud CFA volunteer firefighter with the Tynong Fire Brigade, I am professionally qualified and have been a member for 20 years having served as Lieutenant , Crew Leader and Treasurer.

I raise my concern as an experienced fire fighter with some understanding of CFA and its relationship with Victorian communities.

Victoria is recognised as one of the most at risk bushfire regions in the world and as such needs the best fire fighting capability in the world. This legislation splits up Victoria's fire fighting capacity and potentially puts us all at risk when the next Ash Wednesday or Black Saturday occurs.

When (not if) another major fire event occurs will we have the surge capacity to meet the challenge? Or will it have been eroded because those brigades we depend on have been deskilled or sidelined because they are in FRV areas?

Another of my concerns is the motive for this new legislation and its potential effects on CFA Volunteers I don't understand why we need to split CFA up.

None of the inquiries suggested it and the Bushfires Royal Commission actually praised the integrated model of paid and volunteers working together.

How are we supposed to work with FRV, a separate organisation with different priorities? A simple question if a CFA volunteer crew and a FRV crew arrive at a fire, who's in charge?

Another of my concerns is that the Presumptive Rights (Cancer) legislation does not treat paid and volunteer firefighters equally. Under this new legislation a paid firefighter with one of the 12 prescribed cancers will automatically get access to treatment and compensation. A volunteer firefighter will have to be "considered" by an unspecified panel and then may be granted compensation.

Having watched the Fiskville process where members had to fight for their rights, I would hate for my family to have to go through the process. This legislation treats me like a second class citizen. It is unjust.

Thank you for considering my submission and I wish for this submission to be listed on the Committee's website.

Regards,

Alan Gorick

Treasurer, Tynong Fire Brigade