



**Robert Kelm**  
**Group Officer**  
**Grampians Group**



4 July 2017

Fire Services Bill Select Committee  
 Department of the Legislative Council  
 Parliament House  
 Spring Street  
 EAST MELBOURNE. VIC 3002

**Proposed Fire Services Legislation Amendment and Firefighters Presumptive Rights Compensation**

It is with deep concern and dismay that I as the Group Officer of Grampians Group, District 17 submit this letter on behalf of the Grampians Group to the Fire Services Bill Select Committee.

The Grampians Group is made up of four (4) very active and dedicated volunteer brigades that proudly and selflessly defend, live in and support the Community of the Grampians and surrounding Districts.

Our concerns with the proposed Legislation Reform are:

- Consultation by the Government with CFA Volunteers and their representatives as is required under the CFA Act and the Volunteer Charter has not taken place. Volunteers and the wider community within the Grampians Area are frustrated, anxious and feeling undervalued as there has been no serious and extensive consultation. The views of Volunteers within the Grampians Group, our community and the Victorian community should be heard and taken into consideration.
- There have been major reviews and a Royal Commission into the fire services, and there have not been any recommendations to split the Country Fire Authority to our knowledge.

We recognize that the current structure of the Victorian fire services may require some alterations to improve service provision but not at the expense of very efficient, effective and highly motivated staff and volunteers who work in the Country Fire Authority to protect our community.

- The Firefighters Presumptive Rights Compensation discriminates against volunteers.

To include this within the Proposed Fire Services Legislation Amendment shows complete disrespect and disregard for volunteer firefighters.

The Fire Services Legislation Amendment and Firefighters Presumptive Rights Compensation are two separate matters and should therefore be dealt with on their own merits. Not used as a bargaining tool.

The Grampians Group can see the disastrous ramifications of lack of consultation, total disrespect and disregard for volunteers and the Country Fire Authority, the Financial and Budgetary Implications and risks to the Community.

The Victorian Government are at its best reckless and at its worst bullying volunteers and the Country Fire Authority and placing the Victorian Community at high risk.

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