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From: Mark Carson [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 6 July 2017 10:21 AM
To: LCSC
Subject: [Suspected Spam] Re: Inquiry into the firefighters presumptive compensation and fire services legislation amendment (reform) bill 2017

Dear Assistant Clerk of Committees

I wish to enter the following submission for consideration for the above inquiry

My name is Mark Carson, and I am a professional full time firefighter employed by the MFESB. I have just over 30 years of service to date, and hold the rank of Senior Station Officer. I hold qualifications including, Ladder, Ultra large Pump, Elevated Work Platform, Control Unit, Water Tanker, Hazmat, EMR and all other basic qualifications required.

As a Senior Station Officer, I have vast experiences when dealing with complex and difficult fires and incidents within the Melbourne Metropolitan District. I have been the Incident Controller at literally hundreds of incidents involving Rescues, Fires, hazardous chemical incidents, work place accidents, high angle rescues, waterway rescues, medical responses, road rescues etc etc.

Like all individuals working within the community, there are good days and bad. As difficult as my job is at times, I love it with all my heart. I owe it. My duty as a firefighter is to protect my community without fear or favour. I want to pass onto the next generation of firefighters an organisation to be proud of. With this in mind, things need to change.

One of the most important changes required would have to be reform when investigating the Fire Services Boundaries.

Melbournes massive expansions over the past number of decades require a full time fire service.

The Board which was responsible for these boundaries was abolished in 1970.

Considering this, are the residents in for example-Knox afforded a different service than other suburbs around it.

This is not at all a reflection on the volunteers that perform a great service. Rather a question of equity for residents who live in an similar but less safe environment (due to inadequate fire coverage). Furthermore, why do Insurance companies charge higher rates to residents who live in CFA Volunteer areas ?

This problem occurs right throughout the boundaries around Melbourne.

Melbourne has changed. The MFB and CFA Acts of 1958 are now nearly 70 years old. A raft of Fire Services reviews and reports have occurred over the past decade to plug the holes.

This current legislation addresses many problems which are occurring within the Fire Services. A world class Fire Service needs more full time firefighters. As the populations increase, so should the size of the professional fire service. Band-aid solutions after a while fall off. This is occurring right now. As a request, I ask you to look into response times between full time and volunteer services around the state of Victoria. These response times are vital when dealing with saving Life and Property? This is not something that is printed on the front pages of a newspaper.

In closing, I would like to share something a little bit different. Approximately 6 months ago, while stationed at Richmond Fire Station, on three separate occasions my crew and I were aggressively approached by members of the public and verbally attacked and physically threatened. If this wasn't bad enough, on two of those occasions we were dealing firstly with a major tram verses car incident with multiple persons injured and a house fire at the other time. When you dedicate your life to protecting life and property, it beggars belief that this could occur. Occur it did. We deserve better than this. Enough has been said in the newspapers and on social media about greedy unions and takeovers. It serves no true purpose, and only hurts those who are on the front line. Even if you don't agree with the rest of my thoughts, please share with your colleagues what's happening out on the ground.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to present this letter and wish the committee all the best in deciding where the future lies for our magnificent Fire Services.

Yours Sincerely

Mark Carson
Senior Station Officer
Box Hill Fire Station

Sent from my iPad