

From: barry fitzpatrick
To: consultation@dpc.vic.gov.au
Cc: [LCSC](#)
Subject: Fire Service Reform
Date: Thursday, 6 July 2017 11:31:59 PM

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Fire Services Bill Select Committee,

I wish to express my strong support for the proposed reform to the Fire Service in Victoria. I encourage you to support this much needed change and improve the system which is outdated and must be modernised. I implore you to pass this Bill for the betterment of our State.

My name is Barry Fitzpatrick and I am both a professional firefighter with the MFB and a CFA volunteer. Like many Victorians I'm fed-up with the media storm that has surrounded the Fire Services for a what seems an eternity. I hope that during your deliberation over whether to support this Fire Service Reform or not that you are able to look at the current situation objectively and consider what is truly best for Victoria as a whole.

The truth at the heart of this proposed reform is that Victoria's current Fire Service model is outdated. There has been very few changes to the fire service boundaries during the last 60 years while the population, built-up areas and major hazards have increase across the state. The city of Melbourne has grown enormously, we now have highly urbanised communities with school, factories, shopping centres and storage facilities where sheep and cattle grassed those 60 years ago.

In Metropolitan areas within the MFB boundaries, assistance to emergencies can be guaranteed within 8 minutes so to mitigate and minimise dangers to the public. MFB Fire Stations and resources are very specifically positioned to ensure these quick turnout times and provide the best possible chance of saving life and property. Unfortunately, not all of our highly populated suburbs/communities reside within the MFB boundaries, suburbs such as Dandenong, Springvale, Point Cook, Hopper Crossing, Eltham, Caroline Springs and Melton to name but a few rely heavily on the efforts of volunteers.

Despite the very best efforts of the volunteers that selflessly offer their time and energy to help protect Melbourne outer suburb areas they cannot be expected to turnout from their stations with fully crewed trucks within 90 seconds, they cannot be expected to arrive on scene within a guaranteed 8 minutes and therefore they cannot be expected to provide the same level of service that provided to neighbouring suburbs because they are inside the MFB boundary.

As part of this reform a commitment to reviewing our states fire service boundaries is essential.

As a professional firefighter its imperative that measures are in place to minimise (where

possible) the dangers we place ourselves in while working. Knowing that further support is on-scene particularly during internal attack of structure fires exceptionally important.

So I ask you, are our outer-suburban communities with high populations getting the fire service they deserve?

Are we placing volunteer and professional firefighter at greater danger because boundaries haven't changed as Melbourne has grown?

Is it time to modernise Victoria's fire services?

With kind regards,

Barry Fitzpatrick

Sent from [Outlook](#)