

Inquiry into the firefighters Presumptive Rights Compensation and Fire Service Reform Legislation Amendment Bill 2017.

Dear Assistant Clerk Committee,

My name is Simon McCormack I have been a CFA Professional career firefighter for approximately 11 years. My position is a Leading Firefighter and I'm based at Geelong City Fire Brigade.

I write to express my full support for the proposed Fire Services Reform and Presumptive Rights legislation Bill.

In my brigade area of Geelong City we are a fully urbanised firefighting station where we deal in Road accident rescue, technical rescue such High/Steep angle rope rescue, trench/confined space rescue, coupled with two urban firefighting vehicles and a ladder platform which is used for high rise firefighting and rescue, with a capability to reach heights of 42 meters. I'm qualified in all of these specialist response aspects and firefighting.

Our brigade area is growing laterally and also vertically which is putting more and more pressure on the Geelong City response area. New estates outside Geelong are being developed between Geelong and Torquay/Barwon Heads which are predicting up to 50,000 population growth by the year 2020, further more stretching our resources, manning and capabilities.

I've seen first hand what happens when volunteers fail to respond in my neighbouring brigade area. This I "state" is no fault of their own, as volunteerism has vastly changed in the past 20 years. Pressure of jobs, family life/time for which a volunteer need s to train to a minimal standard, prepare and respond for all emergencies is being totally hindered due to these simplistic life duties. Volunteers are being stretched further and further. This places extreme pressure on safety of our personal, our brigade capabilities and resources taken from our area. I whole heartedly back this fire service reform for a new and modernised model.

Geelong City is constantly under pressure, an example of this is taken from the Bellarine Peninsula where no volunteer stations can turn out from Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm. If there is an emergency/incident on the Bellarine Peninsula, Geelong City's Pumper two appliance responds to the Bellarine which leaves Geelong City's response area short of an

appliance and crewing. This places extreme pressure on Geelong and its supporting brigades of Belmont and Corio. Safety is our number one priority for us and the community of Geelong which is compromised continually.

Victoria's fire services boundaries have not changed significantly in 60 years. Under this outdated system, 35 areas are wrongly zoned as 'country', despite being heavily urbanised and residential. Frankston, Cranbourne, Dandenong, Craigieburn, Melton, Springvale, Boronia and Geelong are just some of the 35 'country areas'.

These areas need to be modernised as they are highly urbanised areas as part of the reform of the fire service.

All Victorian, professional and volunteer firefighters, deserve modern fire services that meet the needs of our growing communities.

To ensure the safety of all Victorians - including me as a firefighter, I ask you to please seriously consider your support for the proposed fire services reform.

Reform of our fire services will ensure the safety of your constituents, and all communities in our growing state. Additionally, it will ensure the safety of our firefighters and stop the ever increasing and unrealistic demand being placed on volunteer firefighters because of the enormous urban growth resulting in increased emergency calls.

I also respectfully submit that you give consideration to my request to modernise the fire service along with the introduction of presumptive legislation laws to protect me and my colleagues.

This is important to me and my colleagues

Kind Regards

Simon McCormack
Leading Firefighter
Geelong City Fire Brigade


