



Braydn Sante [REDACTED]

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To Consultation/DTF@DTF  
cc  
bcc  
Subject INQUIRY INTO THE FIREFIGHTERS'  
PRESUMPTIVE RIGHTS  
COMPENSATION AND FIRE  
SERVICES LEGISLATION  
AMENDMENT (REFORM) BILL 2017

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees,

My name is Braydn Di Sante and I am a level three career firefighter on D shift at Ballarat City. I have been a career fire fighter with Country Fire Authority for three years with seven years spent as a volunteer at Hoppers Crossing. I currently live in Werribee with my partner and our 13month old son.

In the three years served as a career fire fighter I have spent time in Warrnambool (sent there straight out of 16 week fulltime recruit course), Caroline Springs fire station, and now at Ballarat City.

I am writing the submission **IN SUPPORT** of the proposed reform of the fire services for the following reasons;

- I believe that having professional fire fighters from CFA and MFB that don't operate under the one banner/ organisation is hindering effective community safety. I don't understand why we are not working as one with the same equipment, same operating procedures, under the same act, and under the same chief/ commissioner.  
Whilst appointed to Caroline Springs, at least 70% of our fire calls were either supporting MFB or being supported by MFB. With this, even just trying to communicate with one another was made difficult due to having to use multiple radios on either CFA's channel or MFB's. Attending alarmed premises fire calls were difficult because of the different procedures taken by both organisations, so on and so forth.
- In the combined nine plus years of service for CFA I have witnessed (like all) the incredible growth in population with more and more houses being built every day, the roads being used by more vehicles, and the amount of people working longer hours. With this, the ability for people to give their time up to volunteer as a fire fighter are getting harder and harder. In no way is that at the fault of the volunteer fire fighters who are finding it harder and harder to attend training or attend fire calls, it is simply just the way things are happening in our current climate. This is why having a guaranteed response of seven fire fighters to incidents is vital. Unfortunately it is unknown if an appliance from a volunteer fire station is guaranteed to get out in the appropriate time or even at all. Having

a guaranteed response of seven fire fighters provides that certainty that if (God forbid) something happened to fire fighters or anyone else for that matter at an incident, that we would have fire fighters at a ready to rescue them. It also guarantees the vital service that our communities need and absolutely deserve. People call triple zero when they are at an all-time low and if we as an emergency service can't provide them with the timely and guaranteed response we are letting them down.

- The reform will have nil effect on CFA volunteers. It will allow Country Fire Authority to be 100% volunteers meaning that volunteers, CFA, VFBV, and the UFU will not have to consult every time which would cease anger and arguments like we have seen for far too long now.
- Training for volunteers in CFA will not change. Operation officers and Operation Managers will still work for CFA and provide the necessary training packages and continuation training for all volunteers within CFA, just like they do now.
- The surge capacity of volunteers will not change. Like it has been said from day one. The reform is not about culling any volunteers at all, it's about removing the professional fire fighters and combining them with the professionals from MFB. The only way the surge capacity would change is if the head strong members that despise Career/ Perms/ Full timers fire fighters decide to throw everything in and leave. Fortunately there are a small majority that are like this, which is extremely sad. However, if they are planning to leave simply because a reform is going to happen, then they must be in it for the wrong reason.
- The damage this dispute has had on my workplace and myself is unacceptable. I joined the career ranks because I was proud of being a fire fighter, I was happy to tell people what I did as a profession when asked. But due to this dispute I now lie about what I do. I am tired of constantly being asked about what is going on, why is the union trying to break up the CFA, why don't we want to be associated with volunteers, all of this because of lies being spread. Career fire fighters are the United Fire fighters Union, we are definitely not here to break up the CFA. We are here because we love our job and love serving our communities, just like the volunteers do. All we want is what's best for the community and that is a guaranteed response with the appropriate training and resources. This dispute has broken up friendships with volunteer members I once volunteered with which is devastating. Here we are doing what we love to do but no longer talk because rumours being spread about the UFU and career fire fighters.
- It is disturbing and hurtful when I can't even go on holidays and get away

from work and the dispute. In January I went on leave and headed to the High Country of Victoria only to find rural volunteer sheds displaying messages about Back the CFA, naming and shaming Premier Daniel Andrew's, and calling the UFU (which again is currently made up of career fire fighters from CFA) thugs and other hurtful names. All of this which is not needed and un true made up from lies. How on earth would the reform even affect these small rural volunteer brigades? I can tell you.. it won't affect them at all! They will continue to do what they have for the last fifty plus years, they will still be CFA. The only difference will be the 35 integrated stations with career fire fighters will be the proposed FRV career fire fighters and CFA volunteers. Like career fire fighters from CFA do now.

- Nowhere does it say that volunteers are no longer wanted or needed in the current 35 integrated when the reform happens, there will always be a place for volunteers!
- The dispute needs to end for all! The fighting needs to stop, the community needs the appropriate response and we all need to get on with the job we signed up for. Serving the community!

This I why I believe the reform needs to happen.

Yours sincerely,



**Braydn Di Sante Firefighter**

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