



Andrew Elliott [REDACTED]
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To Consultation/DTF@DTF
cc
bcc
Subject Fire Services Reform

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees,

My name is Andrew Elliott, I have been a Firefighter with MFB for 3 years. I am currently assigned to Northern MFB zone. I am writing to express my support for the proposed fire service reform as I believe it will hold many benefits for MFB and CFA organisations and the Victorian Community as a whole.

Melbourne's current fire boundaries have not changed significantly in the last 60 years. Just try to imagine the growth that has taken place in this time! Urban growth, increases in industrial activity, infrastructure growth, new freeways, schools, hospitals you-name-it, Melbourne has changed considerably in this time but yet, shockingly, our fire service boundaries remain the same.

Surely communities on the ever growing fringes of the city, that are currently considered 'country,' and major rural cities of Victoria deserve the same fire protection and peace of mind that the rest of city and suburban Melbourne receive.

Having recently completed training at Victorian Emergency Management Training Centre I found it surprising to have trained separately from CFA professional firefighters for what is essentially the same urban firefighting role. Why do we have different procedures and equipment just because we are on one side of the boundary from one another? Why is one side is considered 'country' and the other metropolitan? Even though our task and environment is essentially the same? Considering that when stationed on the outer MFB boundaries how often MFB and CFA crews must work together you would think it common sense to use the same equipment and procedure. Alas, we wear a different uniform, need special equipment and adaptors for our equipment to work together! We don't even use the same radio system! I believe that all urban firefighters should be trained in the same manner, using the same equipment and procedure. I believe the proposed changes can improve this. Community and fire safety will be the winner. it just makes sense!

It is not just metropolitan fire services that stand to gain from reform. CFA and volunteers also stand to benefit. A proposed package to to assist in recruitment and retention and funding for volunteer station, training and equipment upgrades would be a great boost to the service received by rural communities and the safety of their firefighters.

The reform of Victoria's fire services, professional urban firefighters under FRV and volunteer rural firefighters under CFA would improve both organisations focus on the needs and interests of their respective workforce and communities, would do away with conflict and be a step forward for both organisations. It would lead to a more efficient and focused fire service as well as ensuring improving and ongoing fire safety for all Victorians into the future.

Yours sincerely,
Andrew Elliott.

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