



Brent Clayton [REDACTED]
06/07/2017 11:46 PM

To Consultation/DTF@DTF
cc
bcc
Subject Fire Services Reform Submission

Hi

Please see attached.

Regards,

Brent Clayton

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Brent Clayton Submission.docx

Dear Fire Service Bill Select Committee,

My name is Brent Clayton, I am a Station Officer currently working at Sunbury Fire Station for the Country Fire Authority (CFA). I joined the CFA career ranks in August 2008 where I trained as a recruit at Fiskville. I was and am still a volunteer at Chewton Fire Brigade.

I have been involved with both urban and rural brigades and in the past few years I have also seen the impacts of the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement (EBA) Dispute, how this has impacted on career staff and volunteers alike.

Where I live, everyone joins the CFA because it's either your house on fire or your neighbour's there is no politics and everyone stops what they are doing and helps out. That's what my community does and that's what my community will always do. There is no care what colour the truck is, what badge it has on the side, or who sits in the truck all that matters is that someone is coming to help.

I talk to other members and they feel the same, the hype about changes to the fire service are non-existent to rural Victoria, if anything they are looking forward to increased funding and increased training opportunities.

If most businesses operated the same way they did 100, 50 or even 20 years ago they would be broke, bankrupted and out of business. It's hard to believe that it has taken so long to review Victoria's fire service in one of the most fire dangerous regions of the world.

I have worked at various different CFA fire stations across the state of Victoria, when I started the crewing on shift was three, a Station Officer, Leading firefighter and a firefighter. With only three staff on shift we consistently were required to work outside of our own CFA Standard Operating Procedures and Standing Orders, that the CFA stipulate "Shall not be broken". Which is a major safety issue, with the assistance of the United Firefighters Union (UFU) we are gradually improving our work practices, minimum crewing schedules, Personal Protective Clothing (PPC) and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) just to mention a few.

With the Government, CFA and UFU working in a consultative process the calibration of all party Ideas will see my employment, my working relations with all stakeholders and my volunteer role change towards a community needs approach to bring this old model of fire service delivery into modern day.

I ask that you consider my following points:

- Give the community reliable & guaranteed service delivery that they deserve and pay for.
- Victoria needs to be focused on the future demands that will be placed on the fire service and deliver a service that can evolve with the rapid growth and increased risk.
- Look at trends of volunteer service and pressures associated with increased call rates.
- Consider factual response time/rates to establish where volunteer systems require improvements.
- Consider my work and contribution as well as my colleagues. Support my need for a EBA and allow confidence in my career management for the future.

- Take away emotional connections, focus on facts & data whilst securing a world class fire service for Victoria.
- Increase in specialised response capabilities, including infrastructure, plant and equipment and training.

In summary I believe that as a Victorian citizen, a volunteer and career firefighter we desperately require your action and assistance to bring reform to our fire services and increase support in my work place so I can perform my role efficiently & effectively within a quality organisation.

I do not accept a second grade fire service with hidden misrepresented flaws that could cost the community their lives, my shift mates or my own health or life. Please put an end to the harsh dispute over working conditions and take away the political agendas. Bring Victoria's fire service in to the 21st century and ensure the health and safety of all firefighters in Victoria as well as the communities you serve.

Station Officer

Brent Clayton.