



David Paton [REDACTED]
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To Consultation/DTF@DTF
cc
bcc
Subject Support for Fire Services Reform.

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees,

INQUIRY INTO THE FIREFIGHTER'S PRESUMPTIVE RIGHTS COMPENSATION AND FIRE SERVICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (REFORM) BILL 2017

I am a Station Officer with the MFB and have been a Firefighter for 26 years.

I live in the suburb of Yarraville and work at Eastern Hill fire station.

I am writing this submission in support of the proposed reform of the fire services for the following reasons

- The Victorian fire service boundaries have not kept up with the growth of Melbourne and have not significantly changed in 60 years.
- This continues to put people, property and Firefighters at risk.
- This outdated system put 35 areas wrongly zoned as Country. These include heavily urbanized and residential areas such as Frankston, Cranbourne, Dandenong, Craigieburn, Melton, Springvale, Boronia and Geelong.
- These areas don't get the Fire Service needed in an urban area, where there are a higher number of emergency calls.
- A fast 8 minute response with 7 professional Firefighters all trained in Breathing Apparatus in 2 Fire Trucks is the standard required in Urban areas. This also provides safer working conditions for all Firefighters on scene.
- After 8 minutes a fire can reach Flash Over which is the point of no return.
- Two Fire trucks with 7 Trained Firefighters responding to an "Alarm of Fire" is only guaranteed in the Metropolitan Fire District protected by the MFB.
- At the moment 35 urban areas of Victoria are not guaranteed the same protection that people living in the Metropolitan Fire District get.
- When Firefighters respond to the "Alarm Of Fire" in these 35 Urban areas they are not guaranteed suitably trained Firefighters will respond and be able to back them up and provide help. This therefore does not provide an effective

Firefighting and rescue capability. This will place Firefighters at risk of injury or death.

- One career only Fire Service will strengthen and enhance firefighting capabilities across the State of Victoria by providing the highest standards of training and equipment including emergency response capabilities.
- This will also take pressure off Volunteers in these Urban areas. It will ease the pressure created by Volunteers Brigades that may continually fail to respond during Business hours when many Volunteers are away working.
- Surge Capacity will not be affected as Volunteers will continue to respond as they do now.

Presumptive Cancer Legislation.

- It is internationally accepted that Firefighters are exposed to many dangerous Toxins and Carcinogens during their careers. This considerably increases the risk of Firefighters contracting some form of Cancer.
- These Toxins and Carcinogens do not need to be breathed in to cause Cancer they can be absorbed through the skin.
- I have known many Firefighters in the MFB that have developed different forms of Cancer during their Careers.

Yours sincerely

David Paton

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