



**Dominic De Vincentis**

06/07/2017 06:36 PM

To Consultation/DTF@DTF  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Fire Services reform submission

Dear Members of the Fire Services Reform Select Committee,

Please find attached my submission for consideration.

Regards,



**Dominic De Vincentis** Senior Station Officer  
Greenvale Fire Station, 33 Barrymore Road Greenvale Vic 3059

This email is for official use only. The information in this communication is privileged and confidential, intended only for the use of the individual or entity named. If you are not the intended recipient, any dissemination, copying or use of the information is strictly prohibited. Any personal information in this email must be handled in accordance with the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) and applicable laws. If you have received this transmission in error please inform us by return email and then



delete it immediately from your system. Fire Service Reform Submission.pdf

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees

## **INQUIRY INTO THE FIREFIGHTERS' PRESUMPTIVE RIGHTS COMPENSATION AND FIRE SERVICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (REFORM) BILL 2017**

My name is Dominic De Vincentis and I am a Senior Station Officer with the MFESB, I have been employed as a career fire-fighter for 28 years. I live in Eltham North and currently work at Greenvale fire station on secondment to the CFA.

During this time I have been professionally trained in fire fighting, Emergency Medical Response (EMR) and as a fire investigator.

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

My crew and I have been recognising for saving the life of an elderly gentleman during an EMR event, this was due to a quick and effective response from a career fire station. In the event of a medical emergency response call out, a delay in minutes can be the difference between a successful and adverse outcome. Emergency Medical Response by a professional fire service assists Ambulance Victoria in ensuring time critical response to medical incidents and helping to save lives.

I am currently on secondment to the CFA from the MFB. I am in the fortunate position of having experienced working in the MFB that ensures a guaranteed emergency response of two fire trucks with at least 7 fire-fighters being dispatched arriving on scene within 8 minutes.

This guaranteed response results in greater community safety and protection and also provides a safer working environment for fire fighters operating in dangerous and often unpredictable conditions.

Unfortunately the current CFA arrangements can't guarantee that two fire trucks with 7 professional fire fighters will be dispatched and arrive on scene within 8 minutes. This can delay fire fighting operations due to insufficient fire fighter numbers to safely begin internal search and rescue of houses involved in fire.

Volunteer fire fighters selflessly serve the community they live in however, with increased demand on families and financial obligations some volunteers are required to work outside their communities and as such a rapid response to an emergency call out can't be guaranteed upon 24 hours a day / 365 days a year.

Victoria's fire services boundaries have not changed significantly in 60 years. Under this out-dated 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'. The fire services in these highly urbanised areas with high residential density and other industrial risks needs to be modernised as part of the reform of the fire services. I believe that 8 minute response times, with 7 professional career fire-fighters on two fire trucks is the minimum standard needed in highly urbanised areas.

Employing all career fire-fighters in one fire service will not affect volunteer turnout or surge capacity, support for volunteers will be maintained with operational fire-fighters such as Operational Officers being employed by FRV and continuing their roles through an arrangement with CFA.

The proposed reforms are specific to the 35 integrated stations primary response areas; there will be no detrimental effect on other volunteer brigades or bushfire response. The reform will also benefit volunteers as it has included a package to assist with volunteer recruitment and retention across the CFA; and includes funding for volunteer station upgrades.

The reform will assist with standardisation of career staff training, specialist response standards and equipment.

It would be beneficial to have all career staff being employed by one fire service to ensure enhanced interoperability.

I respectfully submit that you give consideration to my request to modernise the fire service along with the introduction of presumptive legislation laws to protect fire service employees and volunteer fire fighters alike.

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 fire-fighters and stop the ever increasing and unrealistic demand being placed on volunteer fire-fighters because of the enormous urban growth resulting in increased emergency calls.

Yours sincerely,

Dominic De Vincentis  
Senior Station Officer, MEFSB / CFA.

████████████████████  
██