



Patrick Shawcross

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To Consultation/DTF@DTF
cc
bcc
Subject Fire Sevices Reform

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees,

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

My name is Patrick Shawcross and I am a Leading Firefighter employed by the Country Fire Authority as a career firefighter for the past 5½ years.

I live in Ballarat Central and I my appointed position is to the Ballarat City Fire Station.

I have also volunteered within the community of Colac for 7½ years with CFA, where I still maintain my membership at the request of the brigade captain, despite living 100 kilometres away from this locality. As a volunteer, I provide ongoing support to the Colac Fire Brigade members and local community through training and mentoring. I am writing this submission asking you to consider showing your support of the proposed reform of the fire services.

The new reforms will support expansion of the current career firefighting services, providing the Victorian community with:

- guaranteed response time
- guaranteed crew numbers
- guaranteed firefighting skills

As a single parent, I have a 15 year old son and I would like to think that in years to come when he potentially has a family of his own, that he will receive an adequate level of fire service coverage for his family. In my time as a volunteer and career firefighter, I have seen a significant shift at a local level in the ability for volunteers to provide the required level of service to the community. Due to a combination of lifestyle, employment and family commitments, the ability of volunteer CFA members to respond to fires and incidents appears unfortunately to be on the decline. I have a number of CFA volunteer colleagues who have acknowledged that due to the rigour and complexity of today's modern lifestyle, they are unable to commit to the level of community service they may have once enjoyed and provided.

The proposed fire services reform will mean enhanced community safety and protection, moving towards filling the void left by the inability and decline of CFA volunteers to commit their skills, knowledge and time.

Please give the fire services reform the due consideration it deserves for the future of all Victorian community members.

Yours sincerely,

Patrick

Patrick Shawcross Leading Firefighter - A Platoon

CFA Ballarat City Fire Station – 1120 Sturt Street, Ballarat VIC 3250

[com/cfavic](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au)

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