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To Consultation/DTF@DTF
cc
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Subject Fire Services Reform Select
Committee Submission

Fire Services Reform Select Committee
Submission<?xml:namespace prefix = o ns =
"urn:schemas-microsoft-com:office:office" />

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Dear Fire Services Reform Select Committee,

I am a Leading Fire fighter of some 28 years experience working with the Metropolitan Fire Brigade and I give my 100% support to the new Fire services reforms.

Despite me losing the organisation I have my 28 years of history with, the advantages to the community and fire fighter safety far out way anything that I may endure.

A couple of reasons why:

1: The obvious urban sprawl. Population growth to what used to be described as 'country' or 'outer suburbs' has be astonishing over the past 40 or so years.

These suburbs, Springvale, Bayswater, Frankston etc, are now as suburban as Hawthorn,

Clifton Hill or Murrumbeena. Even the opposition in the past couple of weeks has been stating

the Melbourne's population will overtake Sydney's and that we need to put infrastructure in

place to meet the new demands of all these people. It would seem to them, except for the Fire Services.

Which I actually find quite bizarre. Surely Fire Protection is just as important as any of the other essential

services and it's time to update our very old model.

2: Fire Fighter safety. As I fire fighter I want to know that when I turn out to a fire or incident I will have the appropriate

back up, that if things turn bad I will have back up either on scene or only a minute or 2 away.

People constantly say that this is disrespecting volunteers. I say it is not. The volunteers

do an amazing job.

But our lives are getting busier and busier. Free time is at a premium. Work is getting more demanding.

So it's nothing to do with their volunteering, its life that is getting in the way and they just can't turn out as quickly or as often.

Take the Commonwealth Bank fire in Springvale where the man set himself and the bank on fire.

The second closest CFA station to the Bank is Noble Park. A fully volunteer station. Yep fully volunteer in Noble Park, hardly country. Only 3KM's away. They took 40mins to respond.

It was only that Dandenong CFA(full time) fire fighters were dispatched that the Springvale fire fighters had any back up.

This to me is totally unacceptable both for the community and fire fighter safety.

In conclusion, I again wish to give my support to the reforms. This whole dispute has gone on way too long.

It is effecting myself, other fire fighters, our partners and our families.

The apparent attempt to put professional fire fighters in a negative light in the public domain by certain media

outlets and politicians has to stop and hopefully these reforms, apart from supplying a better more efficient and safer

fire service will assist in doing this..

Thanks for your time and consideration

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NB: I wish my name and address to be withheld , but understand I need these on the submission for it to be accepted.