



[REDACTED]

07/07/2017 10:03 AM

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

1 attachment



fire service review submission.pdf

Hi

Please find attached my submission for the fire services review. I ask that you please keep my name and identity confidential.

Kind Regards

[REDACTED]

Email sent using Optus Webmail

My name is [REDACTED]. I've been a career fire fighter with the Metropolitan Fire Brigade since 2005, currently stationed at Windsor Fire station.

I live with my wife and child in the south east suburbs of Aspendale Gardens (3195) approximately 30kms from the Melbourne CBD.

Back when the MFB\CFA boundaries were defined, Aspendale Gardens was just wetlands, and Aspendale was just a scattering of houses out in the country. Now, these are bustling suburbs with million dollar residential properties, busy commercial and light industrial businesses, as well as major roads that move large volumes of traffic on a daily basis.

Our home is currently covered by Springvale Fire Station (one staffed truck with 4 fire fighters on it, with volunteer support, located approximately 9kms from my house) and Edithvale Fire Station (volunteer response only, located approximately 5kms from my house) from the Country Fire Authority.

Even though we live outside the area currently covered by the MFB, known as the Metropolitan Fire District, (MFD) Mentone Fire station (MFB station #33) is only 7kms away and yet if there was a fire at my house, Springvale and Edithvale CFA would be responded instead, despite the fact Springvale is a further 2kms away, simply because our house is zoned as being in the Country Fire Authority's area.

In the event there was a fire or worse at our house, and we needed emergency assistance there is no guarantee that the responding volunteer fire fighters have the necessary qualifications to get the fire truck(s) to our house under emergency conditions, or have the necessary breathing apparatus training to perform an internal fire attack, or rescue a member of my house, for example my 2 year old daughter if she was trapped inside the burning building.

However, if we lived approximately 2kms closer to the city from where we do now, there would be 2 trucks dispatched within 90 seconds, with at least 7 qualified fire fighters, on scene within 7.7 minutes (average timeframe) and able to undertake all aspects of fire fighting and emergency medical response.

CFA Volunteer stations are given 4 minutes from the time of call to respond a truck. If they haven't responded in the 4 minutes the next station is dispatched, which potentially adds crucial time to getting another truck from further away on scene, creating a greater risk to life and property. I am also led to believe the fire levy is more for residents in CFA areas as opposed to the residents in the Metropolitan Fire District; effectively we are paying more and receiving less.

Please do not mistake my submission as being disrespectful to the Country Fire Authority nor the volunteers that do their best to service the community. However as the outer urban fringe grows and with cost of living constantly on the rise it will become harder for volunteers that live within a 3-4 minute drive of their local fire station to volunteer in their spare time. If they are required and are out of the area or unable to get to the station within the required 3 – 4 minutes, then the truck may not be dispatched.

This model relies on people being available to respond instantly and I don't believe there are too many families now, where both parents aren't working in some capacity. Subsequently this has to have flow on affects to the CFA stations that have volunteer only response with their ability to dispatch a truck, potentially putting people's lives and properties at risk.

Every day I'm on duty, this is the service I help provide (90 second dispatch, and on scene in 7.7 minutes average) to the people that live within the current Metropolitan fire district. I would simply like the same level of service for my family which means the current CFA\MFB boundary needs to be realigned to ensure the closest truck(s) with qualified personnel to undertake all aspects of fire fighting are responded to assist in times of emergency, in the shortest possible timeframe.

Thank you for taking the time to read my submission.