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To Consultation/DTF@DTF
cc
bcc
Subject Inquiry into Fire Service Reform -
Submission

1 attachment



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Hello,

This is my submission to the Fire Service Reform Inquiry.

I would like my name and identity to remain confidential. Only the text of this submission may be considered by the Committee.

Best Regards.

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees

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

I am [REDACTED];

[REDACTED], employed for approximately 31 years by the MFB

I live in Vermont and work in Burnley facility and East Melbourne headquarters.

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

When I joined the MFB 31 years ago there was always discussion about one Fire Service. This became more evident as I progressed through my career and working with the CFA on the MFB/CFA boundary. This became more evident again after Black Saturday and Hazelwood fire where the agencies worked together but under different arrangement, equipment and systems.

The development and sprawl of metropolitan Melbourne has been significant in 31 years and it is nonsensical that the MFB/CFA boundary has not moved to reflect this change. The evolution of the CFA from being a volunteer country/bushfire organisation to becoming an urban agency has created significant tension which is pulling it apart.

It is critical that CFA volunteers respond to rural areas and support urban firefighters in surge capacity. It is not possible and does not make economic sense to have the whole of Victoria covered by permanent firefighters. The CFA as a volunteer organisation would be perfectly placed to provide fire coverage across the state in non-urban areas.

After Black Saturday and the NW Floods reviews the creation of Emergency Management Victoria (EMV) and the Emergency Management Commissioner occurred. A key initiative was interoperability between the Agencies. I have been heavily involved with this, but it has been hard going. If permanent CFA and MFB (urban areas) were 'one' it would be much simpler and more efficient to achieve true interoperability.

One issue I do have with the legislation is the loss of the identity of the MFB which has been in place for 126 years of which I have been a part of for 31 years. There is a Senior Station Officer that has been in the MFB for 50 years. The MFB is part of the fabric of Melbourne and Victoria, and is well known in Australia and globally. We have delegations from overseas who come to visit our Fire Service to see what we do. Collingwood football club is 125 years old and there is no way they will change their name. For me the equivalent is like knocking down a historic building, the heritage of Melbourne will be irreparably damaged.

Finally I do not agree with the rank alignment where it is proposed that CFA Operations Managers become Assistant Chiefs and Operations Officers become Commanders. This is a gross lack of recognition of the the training, qualifications and skills of MFB senior Command. This will create disharmony when we are trying to build an organisation as

result of a merger. CFA already has Assistant Chiefs so why not align from top down which will create a new rank of Operations Officer who is a station based or cluster manager.

Ultimately it comes down to public value and service to the community and creating one permanent urban fire service will be good for Victoria.

On a personal note the presumptive legislation is sensational as it recognises the contribution that Firefighters make and the danger they face on a daily basis.

I would like my name and identity to be confidential.

Yours sincerely,

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.