

**Prue Purdey**

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**From:** Inquiry into the Firefighters' Presumptive Rights Compensation and Fire Services Legislation Amendment (Reform) Bill 2017 [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday, 24 June 2017 4:38 PM  
**To:** LCSC  
**Subject:** New Submission to Inquiry into the Firefighters' Presumptive Rights Compensation and Fire Services Legislation Amendment (Reform) Bill 2017

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into the Firefighters' Presumptive Rights Compensation and Fire Services Legislation Amendment (Reform) Bill 2017

Mr Kenneth Dwight  
 [REDACTED]

**SUBMISSION CONTENT:**

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Hello Honorable Members

I am writing this small submission to you as a concerned member of the CFA and SES in Victoria regarding the The Firefighters Presumptive legislation and The Fire Services legislation before you. I have been a volunteer member of CFA for nearly 30 years and SES for 25 years, serving with a number of brigades and units across Victoria. I am an full-time emergency service worker and Union Member.

For some purpose only known to the current Government and UFU this legislation appears to divide firefighters into two camps Full-time and Volunteer only, taking all full-time CFA staff out of CFA and forming a new Fire Service and doing away with MFB. The presumptive legislation attached to the same bill seeks to do the same with different means of application for full time members and a harder test for volunteers,

This reform should not be done to the detriment of volunteers in those currently integrated stations. The foolish idea of having two brigades in one fire station, one full time and volunteer is in my opinion foolish and will not work, volunteer members will leave and as a State we will loose that experience and man power. I would have thought that the status quo of having an integrated brigade structure is the best model and has been honed over many years of experience, call it Fire and Rescue Victoria or whatever you like. Don't forget that the majority of Fire Fighters in the State are volunteers and some of the most professional I have seen, to change to a structure that turns them into 2nd class members will end in tears.

The next thing I see causing a problem is the fact that CFA will be stripped of its full time officers who will be employed by FRV. These Fire Fighters will then have a loyalty more to their Employer and their Union than to the people of Victoria. CFA Full time staff should be left to control the CFA as members of the CFA not seconded from some other organization with it's own purposes and charter (does this include the Chief Officer of CFA?, I don't know, do you). This whole program by the Govt appears to be designed by people who have never fought a fire in the bush or country Victoria, no consultation has been taken with the

majority of Fire Fighters in this State, CFA Volunteers, and seems directed only to appease a very powerful UNION and not to keep the people of Victoria safe. The Governments plan of dividing and conquer will only destroy our Fire Services not enhance them.

I have fought fires for a long time in this state having joined just after Ash Wednesday including Black Saturday and as Army member in NSW. I agree that reform is needed but not destruction of the best volunteer fire service in the world. A full time integrated service with volunteers alongside a volunteer service for country Victoria with it's own full time members would drop the need to provide two Brigades and equipment in one station and the associated costs involved. Give the UFU Members their working conditions but the idea of allowing their executive veto control over operational matters is repugnant to me and should not be allowed or even considered. Consider if this became policy within in other service Unions such as the Victoria Police Association. I am a Union Member and Delegate and I would fight for any appropriate condition for my members but not to seek to control the Agency I work for. Ladies and Gentlemen please consider this legislation carefully and make the appropriate changes as needed after proper consultation with the members affected, do not be railroaded by a Government who appears to have an agenda combined with UFU empire building. Thank you for your interest in reading this submission.

Kenneth James DWIGHT BM VA

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File1:

File2:

File3: