From: A & S Perry
To: LCSC
Subject: Fire Services Bill Select Committee.
Date: Friday, 7 July 2017 5:27:31 PM

Dear Committee Members,

I am the Captain of the Yarck Rural Fire Brigade with twenty years fire fighting experience. I hold grave concerns for the negative outcomes of the Fire Services Bill as it currently stands. I strongly feel the process, or rather the lack of process that has brought us to this point is the sorry outcome of the clumsy politicization of an irreplaceable asset gifted to this state by its fire fighting volunteers. To now offer our 45,000 volunteers 10 working days to comment on this reform, as part of a six week select committee process is in my view plainly tokenism. Do we really believe that such a short time frame is appropriate for such a major overhaul? Do we really believe we will have the necessary information required to make the important recommendations, or do we rely on the information from the many previous reviews of which none recommended this course of action.

The decision to couple the presumptive cancer legislation to this sorry process is for me one of the most disgraceful acts of political sin perpetrated on our fire fighters to date. It is my understanding that the legislation still won't offer volunteers the same rights as paid staff, as outlined by the legal advice received by the VFBV.

If our fire services require reform, an apology should be offered to all involved and affected as a result of the recent debacle, and an appropriate process should begin to carry out the reforms. The previous reviews should be acknowledged, experts in the field should be involved and a meaningful outcome sort. There is too much riding on this to get it wrong.

The volunteer ethic is a fickle thing and for the price, it's cheaper to handle it with care. I am soliciting your help to ensure I have crews for our fire trucks. I can't force my members to climb a fire truck to risk their skin. They need to feel valued and be valued. We disregard them at our peril.

Yours faithfully ,

Andrew Perry

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