



07/07/2017 04:51 PM

To Consultation/DTF@DTF,  
LCSC@parliament.vic.gov.au  
cc  
bcc  
Subject Fire Services Reform

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees,

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

With regards to my submission, I wish for my name to remain confidential.

I would like to express my support for the long overdue reforms to Victoria's fire services.

My name is [REDACTED] I live in Northcote and I've been employed as a firefighter with the Metropolitan Fire Brigade for 11 years. I hold the rank of Station Officer and I'm currently based at Northcote Fire Station.

I've seen firsthand what happens when fire crews operate in areas of uncertainty not knowing how many career firefighters will be responded to emergencies to help them work safely. I also worry about heavily populated areas of greater Melbourne without suitable fire coverage, especially when lives are at risk.

Victoria's fire services boundaries have not changed significantly in 60 years. Under this out-dated system, 35 areas are wrongly zoned as 'country', despite being heavily urbanised and residential. Frankston, Cranbourne, Dandenong, Craigieburn, Melton, Springvale, Boronia and Geelong are just some of the 35 'country areas'.

These areas need to be modernised as they are highly urbanised areas as part of the reform of the fire service. A rapid 8 minute response, with 7 professional career firefighters on two fire trucks is the minimum standard needed in urban areas. This helps us get to work as safely as possible, in breathing apparatus whilst entering burning buildings.

All Victorian, professional and volunteer firefighters, deserve modern fire services that meet the needs of our growing communities, to help keep them safe.

It is imperative that this select committee consider what fire and emergency coverage they would like or would consider appropriate if they lived in these areas.

Reform of our fire services will ensure the safety of all communities in our growing state. Additionally, it will ensure the safety of our firefighters and stop the ever increasing and unrealistic demand being placed on volunteer firefighters because of the enormous urban growth resulting in increased emergency calls.

Finally, I want to convey to the Committee the emotional toll this ongoing dispute has had on both my colleagues and myself. The tension and unease I have noticed within my workplace as well as in the community needs to end and a resolution which puts community safety at the forefront is essential. What began as an EBA negotiation has turned into a public, politically-driven agenda with little regard for the major issue at hand – public safety. When making your recommendations and vote, please make this your deciding factor.

Sincerely,

A solid black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.