



Paul Fixter [REDACTED]
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To Consultation/DTF@DTF
cc
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Subject Fire Service Reform

Dear Committee members

My name is Paul Fixter and I am currently a Senior Station Officer at Morwell Fire Station. I have been a SSO since 2010.

Prior to this, I was a Senior Station Officer in the ACTFR from 1997 to 2010. I was also in the RAAF from 1994 to 1997 as a Firefighter.

In my opinion the proposed Fire service Reform is the best and only way to move forward into the future for Fire Services in Victoria. I joined the CFA in 2010 and I love my job. It is my life long career. However I noticed some vast differences between the ACTFR and the CFA. Many of those differences see the CFA (in my eyes) as an antiquated service that needs reform.

-ACTFR had full time firefighters only and all skills were the same across the board. I knew when I went to house fire that all members could wear Breathing Apparatus and so every task I asked of them was done without question.

In the CFA more times than not, I have to hope like hell that the back up we are receiving are qualified in all aspects and proficient BA wearers. This is not the case. I have to either re page for more qualified volunteers or make do with very limited numbers of Career Firefighters due to a failure to respond from Volunteer Brigades. This is dangerous and sorting this out at a job out takes my concentration away from the incident management.

We have a fantastic relationship with many volunteer Brigades in the Latrobe Valley. The proposed changes will in no way effect that relationship. If anything it will enhance it.

The CFA as it now stands can not continue. It is an unworkable situation and very outdated. This is due to egos and history determining response arrangements to certain areas, which at times means a fully staffed Career fire truck is not responded until the incident escalates and it is too late. Under the FRV model, this response and career staffing arrangements will be based on facts and independent. Not on who wants staff and who does not in a response matrix.

I have heard a lot of arguments saying that Intergration is the best way and the CFA is unique and world class. If it was a great model then why does no other agency in Australia use it? It is not the best model and it actually creates so many conflicts that it becomes stressful to actually go to work and do your job.

A separate career volunteer service will have many benefits including:
- Fact based independent staff station placing based on operational needs
- giving volunteers their own entity and service
- eliminating wars with VFBV every time staff try and negotiate an EBA
- good operational and organisational changes can happen in each service more quickly due to the size of each organisation.

In conclusion, this change must happen. It is overdue and the only way forward. Keeping the stays quo will not grow the fire services, it will take

us back another 20 years. It is time for FRV to happen for the betterment of all Victorians. It is time for the CFA to become the 'Country' Fire Authority.

Kind Regards and thank you for considering.

I can be contacted for further information on my experiences in another state anytime on [REDACTED]

Paul Fixter
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Morwell