



Steven Brodie [REDACTED]

07/07/2017 02:18 PM

To Consultation/DTF@DTF

cc Steven Brodie  
[REDACTED]

bcc

Subject Submission

Dear Committee

My Name is Steve Brodie and I am a Leading fire-fighter at Dandenong fire station. I have been a career fire-fighter for almost 15 years . I joined CFA as a Volunteer at Mooroolbark before deciding to make fire-fighting a career. My passion for helping the community has become my dream job and I get to train and mentor volunteers and career staff in all aspects of fire- fighting.

However for each of the previous EBA negotiations the VFBV have done everything within its power to attack our position within CFA, claiming a union takeover on each and every occasion, further creating division within the Volunteer ranks. With no consideration as to the impact on CFA the Liberal party have attempted to capitalise on this this situation, throwing support to the VFBV to gain political advantage creating fear and telling miss truths, mostly during parliamentary privilege: Mathew Guy- ( Volunteers will stand and watch houses burn whilst waiting for 7 career staff to arrive on scene.)

The Herald Sun then reported this garbage as though it was fact and created a wave of fear and anger throughout the community of Victoria . Career staff have been spat on and attacked as a direct result of this behaviour. When all that we want is to have a signed EBA without unwarranted interference from a third party.

Then backed by the Liberals a small number of Volunteers asked for Hands off the CFA, they were told that the union were taking over. I can't undo this damage to the relationship between staff and volunteers, the damage has been done. However a union take over couldn't be further from the truth ! Now we finally have a solution to this problem (**FRV**).

And I would like to start by thanking the Emergency services minister- James Merlino and the Premier Daniel Andrews for finding a solution that not only fixes the confrontation within the states fire service , but improves fire-fighter safety, recognizes the needs of Victoria's growing population, places protecting life above everything else, reduces the pressures placed on certain CFA Volunteer stations through a measured system that implements integration where and when necessary, provides funding for Volunteer needs and the introduction of presumptive legislation for all fire-fighters.

I can't begin to explain how important **FRV** is for the safety of fire-fighters, on several occasions during my time at Hallam, we have had to manage structure fires with only a crew of three! Volunteers through no fault of their own simply failed to respond. Hallam and Dandenong are busy stations with over 2000 calls annually, I understand the strain support brigades are under trying to meet these call rates, they really do their best!

On one occasion after a house fire in Hampton Park I suffered smoke inhalation and ended up spending the day in the emergency department, all due to a combination of complexities that having had 7 qualified fire-fighters on the fire ground would never have occurred. I had just completed a **primary search on my own** for the missing **7 family members** whilst conducting an **aggressive fire attack** to prevent flames spreading, I exited the house with my low air whistle sounding and tasked a Volunteer member who had just arrived on scene to perform a HOT changeover , unfortunately the member wearing **structural gear** did not have the skill set to change the cylinder on my back (HOT CHANGEOVER) so I could continue holding back flames to the bedrooms and re-enter the structure to complete my secondary search and extinguish the fire. Instead I was left fighting flames external to the building and with no breathing protection, whilst he located someone who could help me . I ended up

breathing toxic smoke after a vehicle in the driveway that was previously on fire , almost ran me over forcing me to jump into the Black. To my relief the second crew into this building was from the pumper crew from Dandenong, career staff with the skills set I required however more than 10 minutes after my arrival. This is the very support that the **FRV proposed changes** will automatically see responded and arriving on scene much sooner if not at the same time ! Potentially saving lives!

Victorians that live within the areas these changes impact will have a greater chance to survive such incidents and my only hope is that you as a committee can see through the smoke and mirrors of those who oppose **FRV**.

Thank you for your time and good luck with your decision .

LFF Steve Brodie

Dandenong Fire-Station

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