



07/07/2017 05:01 PM

To "lcsc@parliament.vic.gov.au"  
 <lcsc@parliament.vic.gov.au>,  
 Consultation/DTF@DTF  
 cc  
 bcc  
 Subject Select committee Fire services

To whom it may concern,

My name is [REDACTED], I have been a career firefighter for three years with CFA and I was a CFA volunteer for eight years. I was a Ranger and Field Service Officer with Parks Victoria for ten years previous, and held a number of contract roles with DELWP's predecessors before that.

My CFA volunteer background includes membership at Kalorama -Mt Dandenong, Ouyen, Apollo Bay, Forrest and Bairnsdale.

In my background in working for Parks Victoria, I have been heavily involved in bush fire fighting for 12 years before becoming a CFA career fire fighter, and my personal experience is that the surge capacity that the VFBV talks about is indeed a surge; however it is not sustained in campaign events. Volunteers have careers, families and other hobbies outside of the fire brigade which will continue to erode the number of members with the appropriate skills, time and motivation. During campaign events, there is a lot of 'hurry up and wait' that can be very corrosive to morale and enthusiasm, which all add up to rapidly diminishing numbers after the first week or so of major fires. I firmly believe that we will have no change to those who are keen to be deployed for initial fire attack.

Large bushfires are not controlled by the CFA, as the Authority doesn't have enough Slip-on firefighting appliances, they don't have Dozers, they don't have Tree Fallers and Officers don't have a direct line of acquisition for contract plant, they must go through the local municipality or Forest Fire Management Victoria.

CFA are very good at situating Appliances around assets and structures, but in my experience, events such as the Bairnsdale fire complex of 2013/2014, the local CFA brigades will formulate a plan independently of the Level 3 Incident Control Centre. The role they play in campaign fires will not change, but may in fact become better under the proposed model where I see CFA groups having a more prominent role.

I believe the Select Committee would be well positioned to request a hearing with the AWU and the Forest Fire Management Victoria staff to hear further about the management of bushfire in Victoria.

### ***Impact on fire service delivery across Victoria***

I think this reform will see positive change to fire service delivery. The identity of the CFA, FRV and FFMV will be clearer, and we, as emergency agencies will be able to have clearer engagement than the systems we currently have. Within CFA/MFB there are three cultures; career members in the CFA, volunteer members in the CFA, and those in the MFB.

The career staff culture is different, but more closely aligned to the MFB staff.

The volunteer culture is very different. At my station, Pakenham, many of the volunteers see an opportunity to return to what the brigade was, which was a more social based brigade. As a vol, the social element was, really, more important to me than the emergency response. What I want out of my career as a firey is not at all what I wanted as a vol, and I don't think any less of

the desires of either camp. I like my job because I go to work, do my job well and with pride in a team that have like values and goals, then I go home and don't have to take anything home with me, I leave it all at work. With the trauma of the job, I personally don't want to volunteer and blur the lines of bringing that trauma home with me .

Instead, I volunteer my time with local environmental and arts groups to fill that desire to help the community and meet new and interesting people in the community .

***Effect on volunteer engagement and participation in fire service delivery***

I joined the CFA to get a better understanding of urban firefighting to compliment my bush firefighting role with DNRE, and to utilise my skills and training in helping the community . I transferred between brigades as I moved around Victoria chasing the elusive on -going role with Parks, volunteering with the CFA provided a mechanism for meeting a cross -section of the community I was moving to, a method of being informed of emergencies in the Park areas I worked in (as DELWP and PV don't have a link to the ESTA 000 call centre) and a good social link outside of work. As my career became more complex, the demands on my time increased, and then my wife and I had kids, further impacting on my availability, and also putting a tempory stop on my wife's ability to volunteer .

***Short term and long term cost impact on fire service provision***

*I don't have the budget estimates to comment on this.*

***Underlying policy rationale.***

*Well I believe that the elephant in the room is the industrial issue that has come about from the Fair Work Act amendments. Aside from that, having worked for the state Government for so long in inter-agency Incident Management Teams, I see no reason at all that this wont strengthen our ability to work as one emergency sector for the common goal of protecting life and property.*

██████████ Firefighter.  
Pakenham Fire Station 780



██████████  
██████████  
██████████  
██████████

Protecting lives and property   [cfa.vic.gov.au](http://cfa.vic.gov.au)

---

This email is for official use only. The information in this communication is privileged and confidential, intended only for the use of the individual or entity named. If you are

not the intended recipient, any dissemination, copying or use of the information is strictly prohibited. Any personal information in this email must be handled in accordance with the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic) and applicable laws. If you have received this transmission in error please inform us by return email and then delete it immediately from your system.