

26th June 2017.

Fire Services Bill Select Committee
E: LCSC@parliament.vic.gov.au

Dear Fire Services Bill Select Committee Members,

RE: Victorian Fire Services Reform and Legislation.

I write to support the Fire Services Reform and associated Legislation as recently passed by our current elected representatives in the Victorian State Government.

As a volunteer in various Fire Services since 1971 (London to Australia: NSW, Tasmania and Victoria) and having lived in both Metro and Rural areas, I have witnessed many changes to our environment, culture and population.

In Mansfield, the proposed FRV will have no adverse effects. Emergency Service Volunteers will continue to protect our communities to the best of their abilities. We have no staff here.

I have witnessed the division and hurt caused over years of ongoing argument concerning CFA staff, their EBA negotiations and their perceived lower order compared to volunteers. This has been very unhealthy for all. The package offered gives volunteers their much sought after autonomy combined with superior funding and ongoing support. The staff can also be reassured their workplace is safe and protected with all negotiations conducted solely between their Employer and their representative Union.

I lived in Melbourne for a few decades and know the fire service boundaries have not changed significantly for 50+ years. Many places are still currently zoned as "country" despite now being vastly residential and commercial. The urban crawl has significantly moved outwards and will continue beyond.

Volunteers do what they can when they can but with family, work commitments and age are not in a true position to keep up with today's Emergency Service demands.

We are all entitled to a modern, realistic and professional Fire Service. It is the core responsibility of any Government to provide basic services such as Health, Education and SAFETY.

Finally, I totally support the incorporation of Presumptive Legislation to protect all fire service employees and volunteers from cancer associated risks as a result of their duties.

Please endorse the FRV and proposed legislation.

Respectfully yours,


N.F.N Stephens