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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, 6 July 2017 11:32 PM
To: LCSC; consultation@dpc.vic.gov.au
Subject: Submission for FIREFIGHTERS' PRESUMPTIVE RIGHTS COMPENSATION AND FIRE SERVICES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (REFORM) BILL 2017

Dear Assistant Clerk Committees,

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

I request that my name, address and any other information that could identify me be withheld, i.e. removed from the published version of this submission.

I am a Leading Firefighter with Country Fire Authority (CFA). In 2008 I made the commitment to join the professional career ranks where I have been stationed at Morwell, Eltham, Point Cook and Geelong City as well as relieving at various integrated brigades around the state. I have numerous specialist qualifications above and beyond what is required to do my job. These include Steep Angle Rope Rescue, High Angle Rope Rescue, Confined Space Rescue, Ground Observer, Junior Fire Awareness & Intervention Program practitioner to name a few. And I Have been awarded the National Emergency Medal for my involvement in response to the Black Saturday fires in 2009.

I live in [REDACTED] and work at the CFA Geelong City Fire Brigade.

I was also a 1st Lieutenant CFA Volunteer with Mount Buller Urban Fire Brigade where I was a member for five years from 2003 until successful completing my training at CFA Fiskville Training College in 2008.

I am writing this submission in support of the proposed reform of the fire services for the following reasons:

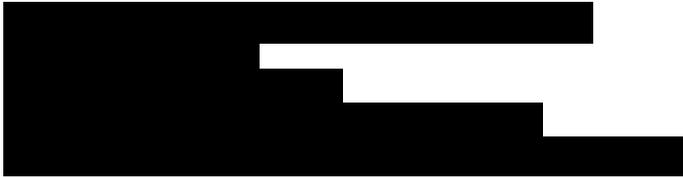
- As a firefighter it is important to have guaranteed backup - guaranteed that two appliances with at least 7 firefighters (qualified in using Breathing Apparatus) will be dispatched within 8 minutes. This is so we can 1. Deliver the best possible service to the greater community and increase their chances of survival. 2. to provide a safe working environment for myself and my colleagues to be able to do the 1st point. Melbourne is touted as being the most liveable city but yet our firefighting capabilities are well behind best global practices for example [NFPA 1710](#) (please click the link). Our communities, our friends, and our families deserve the best NOW.
- Change is a great way to make new beginnings and the fire service structure we provide to the increasingly expanding communities of Melbourne & the outer suburbs as well as our major regional cities is simply not working... It's broken. Numerous Volunteer only brigades failing to respond in highly populated/risk areas and/or responding without necessary competencies WILL lead to preventable deaths. These areas under the reform will see appropriate fire service response when and where it is needed most.
- Numerous times my crew consisting of 3 sometimes 4 Professional Career Firefighters have had to "make do" with the lack of support/structural firefighting qualifications ie. BA from neighboring Volunteer only brigades at structural fires where potential life was at risk. A structural fire is a very dangerous environment and to have to enter and search for trapped people knowing you have little to no support behind you unnecessarily puts our lives and the lives of those are trying to save at risk.
- I like every other Australian deserve to come home to a waiting family after every shift of work. And those odds will only increase with guaranteed two appliances with at least 7 firefighters (qualified in using B A) will be dispatched within 8 minutes. It's about increasing the safety of firefighters who are there to help the community in times of need.
- Allowing all Heavy Pumpers at Professional Career Fire Stations to perform basic Road Accident Rescue (RAR) operations at motor vehicle accidents will increase the chances of survival to those trapped in a vehicle. It would allow RAR trained operators to Safely/rapidly extricate those trapped allowing prompt medical attention and/or set up RAR operations for a Heavy Rescue Appliance to arrive and more technical events.
- The reform will benefit volunteers as it has included a package to assist with volunteer recruitment and retention across the CFA; and includes funding for volunteer station upgrades, equipment and MUCH needed training.
- Employing all career firefighters in one fire service will not affect volunteer turnout or surge capacity as volunteer support will be maintained with operational firefighters, Operation Officer's and Operation Managers etc. being employed by Fire Rescue Victoria but continuing their roles through an arrangement with CFA.

I ask that you consider what is best for the future of our communities we serve and that is a unified professional career fire service providing the best possible response to areas of high population and increased risk. *The public wants to know that in their time of emergency they will get the best possible response in the fastest possible time that are highly skilled to help them.*

CFA should continue to function as a standalone fully volunteer fire service that will continue to operate as it always has serving the communities in regional/rural areas and keeping its "surge" capacity in the states times of need.

In this job seconds really do count.

Yours sincerely,



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