

Kirra Vanzetti

From: Don Darcey [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 3 July 2017 9:57 AM
To: LCSC
Cc: io3@ufuvic.asn.au
Subject: FRV reform

To the Select Committee,

I am a career firefighter of over 30 years and a Station Officer for the last 8 years for the MFB and currently work at Laverton fire station.

As the greater city of Melbourne has boomed in both population and sophistication so has the role of the fire rescue professional. This is an adaption of the role of fire rescue personnel and a community expectation of All Victorians especially those whom live within the huge metropolis that is now greater Melbourne.

The degree of expertise that career firefighters is required in relation to dealing with Hazardous materials, Urban rescue , Emergency medical Responder (EMR). Trench rescue, High rise Rescue , Decontamination, Swift water rescue Ship board firefighting... the list simply goes on is...is remarkable.

The time for Victoria's multiple career fire services to adapt and evolve into a statewide entity has been the elephant in the room for many years. Victoria currently duplicates two major fire services. Two lots of boards and supporting civilian staff, different suppliers of equipment that basically do the same job. Both the MFB and CFA career fire rescue entities have been cross pollinating for many years now.

Same structural fire fighting uniforms , rank structure, step up procedures, and now having combined recruit training at VEMTC confirms this amalgamation.

The MFB's anachronistic boundaries of the 1950's dividing urban from country areas are hopelessly decades out of date. Victoria expands by 150 000 new persons per year and is staring down the barrel of a 10 million population by 2060. For the people of the greater area of Melbourne Fire Service Levy contribution ; they receive absolutely gold standard of Fire rescue support with the addition of expertise of EMR capability, a 7.7 minute response and 7 highly skilled career fire fighters.

If you are outside the relic of the 1950's boundaries of Melbourne or live in a rapidly expanding regional town you will not be guaranteed receiving the safeguard of the aforementioned gold standard. The time to unshackle the boundaries and create a career state service has well and truly arrived.

The current system of two Major career service services with the requirement to duplicate two lots of boards, two civilian support structures , two chief officers , CEO's , previously two training colleges until Fiskville was decommissioned due to contamination ,slightly differing equipment and vehicles/appliances sourced from separate suppliers, different communication devices, the need for memorandums of understanding is nonsensical and antiquated. NSW has a statewide fire service with a Commissioner for the simple reason that it is more SIMPLE to operate.

The fear campaign of change that has has been run is breath taking in distorting the facts.

20 years ago there was fear within some quarters of the ambulance service that the MFB's role of taking on an EMR capability was a veiled encroachment on the role of the ambulance. Ask any ambulance professional today about the incredible teamwork shared by both career firefighter and ambulance technician at a code 0 scenario and there will be nothing but praise.

I'm absolutely sure as time passes that the fear from some quarters of the volunteer body of the fear driven rhetoric of a unionised workforce coming to take over their roles will evaporate as it did with the ambulance service.

As fire rescue professionals both volunteers and career people are in the end, a fraternity.

Hopefully, clarity of thought and not fear of necessary change will enable the creation of a statewide career fire service.

Yours
MFB Station Officer Don Darcey