

Prue Purdey

From: james honey [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 5 July 2017 1:28 PM
To: LCSC
Subject: Fire Services Reform Submission

To the Fire Services Reform Select Committee,

My name is James Honey, I am a fire fighter level two with the Metropolitan Fire Brigade and I am writing a submission for your consideration.

In the two years since I joined the MFB I have mainly operated out of inner city stations, however in the last six months I have been stationed at North Laverton station near the edge of the Metropolitan Fire District. While at North Laverton I have attended calls with both professional and volunteer members of the CFA and have seen firsthand both how differently the two services currently operate, and also areas that could be improved through the proposed reform.

For instance, one glaring example is that the two services don't even use the same mobile radio system thus communication between crews (as we only carry one CFA radio and vice versa) is severely limited. In an emergency situation this fact alone could have dire implications for personnel safety and the ability to save lives and property.

Another example is the discrepancy in turnout times between the professional and volunteer CFA crews. This becomes evident when both professional services are on scene before volunteers have left the station.

North Laverton's urban/industrial turnout area – which is approximately 20 Kilometres from the city - contains not only many residential areas but numerous major hazard facilities which require both rapid response by highly trained staff, and the ability of all crews on the fireground to be able to communicate freely. These are just two areas that I believe can be improved through the proposed reforms which will vastly improve our ability to protect the community and remain safe while doing so.

Further, since I graduated from recruits I have experienced nothing but industrial dispute and vilification of professional fire fighters in the media. The constant barrage of negative press has had a highly detrimental impact on my colleagues and I. The sooner this situation is resolved through the reform and modernisation of the fire services, the sooner we can all (professionals and volunteers alike) focus solely on the role of protecting the ever expanding community.

Regards,

James Honey
Fire fighter level two
North Laverton Station